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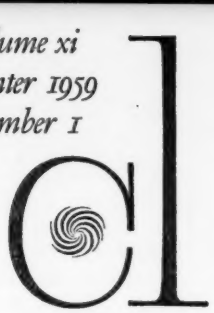

WILLIAM B. COLEY

Gide and Fielding

BY HIS OWN admission André Gide began the study of English literature rather late in life—exactly on his forty-first birthday, if his posterior account of it is to be trusted: "I took lessons, I learnt lists of words, and I plunged into *Robinson Crusoe*. After *Robinson Crusoe* came *Tom Jones*, and then *Gulliver's Travels*, and then I was launched . . . And for years I read nothing but English."[1] And many years after he began the serious study of English literature he wrote (1940) that such were its diversity and abundance that "C'est celle dont la disparition appauvrirait le plus l'humanité."[2]

Of greater significance, however, than Gide's admiration for English literature in general is his particular admiration for its eighteenth-century productions. He translated Blake and Conrad, and the artistic dilemma of Oscar Wilde provoked a book from him; but as the *Journal* shows, it was by way of the prose fiction of the English Augustans that Gide entered into the kingdom of English literature. And more than entered, too. What is perhaps most surprising about the many years in which he read "nothing but English" is how much of what he read was from the so-called Augustan age. The *Journal* entries record readings in Dryden's plays, Swift's *Journal to Stella*, Pope's poems (Gide wanted to translate one of the moral essays), Goldsmith, Sterne, Johnson, Gray's *Letters*, and Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.[3] The early English novelists (Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding) interested him most of all.

What interested Gide in the early English novel was in part what has traditionally interested French men of letters, namely, the relative

[1] "Travels in English Literature," *Verve*, I, No. 2 (Spring 1938), 14. The order of the readings is corroborated by a *Journal* entry of 3 July [1911]; the year by a *Journal* entry of 17 June [1924]. See *Journal, 1889-1939*, rev. ed. (Paris, 1951), pp. 337, 785.

[2] *Journal, 1939-1942*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1946), p. 98.

[3] See esp. *Journal* entries for 1930, *passim*.

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freedom from intrusions of theory and self-conscious formalism.[4] Gide, as a rule classed among those who feel that life must follow art or be impoverished, shared this seemingly uncharacteristic preference of life to art. "French literature," he wrote much later, "sins by excess of dressing, and the meat itself is often lacking." And he added, "I care for art undoubtedly, but what relish has life!"[5] Of course, by "life" Gide does not mean a return to nineteenth-century naturalism. Nevertheless, when contemplating the future of the novel, he seems very much aware of the dangers of formalism. For the "raw meat" of life (as opposed to the enervating and irrelevant forms of artifice) Gide and certain French critics of his time turned to English literature of the eighteenth century.

Gide, although he had read a good deal in the post-Wordsworthian romantics, said of the poetry of Pope, "chargée de signification," that it moved him "plus que les flottantes éjaculations d'un Shelley par exemple, qui me force, pour planer avec lui, à abandonner insatisfaite une trop importante partie de moi-même."[6] Modern students of Pope may feel that Gide is oblivious to the high degree of artifice in that poet. But Gide is paying tribute to an undoubted quality in Pope, namely, his inclusiveness. Shelley, though a spokesman for certain sublime concerns of art, purchased his sublimity at a price. He is, Gide seems to be saying, in the modern sense an "exclusive" poet. Pope, on the other hand, is a poet of tension and balance. He gets more substance into his poetry, sacrifices less. And this capacity for retaining the substance, the "signification" of life, by equilibrating its contradictions is one of the qualities Gide admired in the English Augustans. As he once said of himself: "Je suis un être de dialogue; tout en moi combat et se contredit."[7] Hence, perhaps, his partiality for the Augustan management of the *discordia concors*, and hence also his rather classical theory of art as the supervention of restraint. The greatest artist, according to Gide, is one who glories in being hampered, and for whom obstacles exist merely to be overcome in his art.[8]

We are reminded of the very considerable strain of Calvinistic Protestantism in Gide's own makeup. It was doubtless his awareness of this strain that led him to ponder with interest the proposition (born of a

[4] H.M.P[eyre]., "English Literature Seen through French Eyes," *Yale French Review*, VI (1950), 114-116.

[5] "Travels in English Literature," p. 15.

[6] *Journal, 1889-1939*, p. 979.

[7] *Si le grain ne meurt*, in *Œuvres Complètes* (Paris, 1932-39), X, 341.

[8] Gide's most explicit statement of the doctrine of *la contrainte* is perhaps that in his "L'Évolution du théâtre" (1904). For an interesting, if remote, Augustan analogue, see Shaftesbury's *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour* (1709), esp. Part I, sec. 4-5; Part II, sec. 1-3.

remark of Taine's) that English novelists owed their particular strengths to a tradition of Calvinism. Although he ultimately rejected the proposition, Gide allowed that it might be true if it construed Calvinism merely as a curb which strengthened by its very restrictiveness. Indeed, Gide himself ascribed the solid strength of the English novel to the English "habitude d'une certaine morosité, le désir ou même le besoin de se trouver en faute, et le refus de soi aux sollicitations les plus aimables de la vie." Such, he felt, were the inhibitions which prompted the English novelists "à rechercher la source de l'action et son retentissement le plus secret plutôt que simplement sa suite immédiate, comme il advient chez nombre de nos romanciers."[9]

The implied association of gloom with strength and substance introduces the important related problem of laughter and seriousness in art. Another reason why Gide admired English literature of the Augustan Age may have been that, in its finest and most characteristic forms, it managed a solidity of substance without lapsing into dull solemnity, on the one hand, or into vaporous wit, on the other. Gide has some suggestive remarks on the problem. "Rien de caduc," he wrote in his *Journal*, "autant que les œuvres sérieuses. Ni Molière, ni Cervantes, ni Pascal même, ne sont sérieux; ils sont graves."[10] Semantics aside, this is an important distinction. It closely resembles Fielding's formulation in the *Covent Garden Journal*:

> It is from a very common but a very false Opinion that we constantly mix the Ideas of Levity with those of Wit and Humour ... In like Manner, and with like Error we unite the Ideas of Gravity with Dulness, as if the former was inseparably annexed to the latter.[11]

Substance and weight there must be—witness Pope's poetry "chargée de signification" and Fielding's "real, solid intelligence"—but these qualities do not require, nor should they necessarily be given, solemnity of treatment. Indeed, one of Gide's remarks about Richardson's seriousness suggests that he felt the oppressiveness of that tone to be a fault in a writer whom he otherwise very much admired.[12]

The other extreme, for Gide as for Fielding, is frothy wit, vapor:

> L'art de dire finement les choses ... Qu'ai-je affaire de paraître spirituel? L'épaisseur des grands comiques, des Cervantes, Molière, Rabelais. Leur rire est générosité. Celui qui sourit seulement se croit supérieur; il se prête; l'autre se donne.[13]

[9] *Journal, 1889-1939*, p. 352. The remarks are to be found among the "Feuillets" for 1911.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 991, dated 23 June [1930].

[11] *The Covent Garden Journal, by Sir Alexander Drawcansir, Knt. Censor of Great Britain*, ed. Gerard Edward Jensen (New Haven, 1915), I, 243-244.

[12] "Travels in English Literature," p. 15.

[13] *Journal, 1889-1939*, p. 1133.

The moral implications of generous and selfish laughter are remarkably reminiscent of the distinction Fielding made between the laughter of good nature and that of mere good humor. The key "diagnostic" of the latter is "that glavering sneering smile, whose principal ingredient is malice." Such laughter Fielding derived from Hobbes, who ascribed it to pride or the triumph of the mind when reflecting on its superiority to the condition of others. A mere "sudden glory," it is perforce selfish, temporary. Its opposite is solid, amiable, open. Although Bergson, for example, is a far more immediate influence on Gide's idea of the comic, it may be supposed that Gide knew and roughly shared Fielding's interest in preserving the inclusiveness of the comic attitude. As will be seen, he was familiar with the essay in which Fielding made these almost Shaftesburyan distinctions concerning laughter.[14]

A further reason for Gide's partiality towards eighteenth-century English literature was his feeling that in the novel, at least, it had achieved a relatively "pure" art form. Gide had early abandoned the hermetic symbolism of his youth and, without reverting to previously discredited forms of naturalism, sought new ways of qualifying the autonomy of literature without committing it totally to didactic responsibilities. He spoke with approval, for instance, of Rivière's proposal that decadent symbolist modes be replaced by the classical novel of action. "La parfaite actualisation d'un roman," Rivière had written, "c'est sa parfaite activité. Quand il est en acte, c'est quand il n'est plus composé que d'actions."[15] Rivière proposed the example of Defoe. Gide had other candidates as well: "Il est à remarquer que les Anglais, dont le drame n'a jamais su parfaitement se purifier (au sense où s'est purifiée la tragédie de Racine), sont parvenus d'emblée à une beaucoup plus grande pureté dans le roman de DeFoe, Fielding, et même de Richardson."[16] It seems odd to hear about purity of "action" from one who was both a refugee from art for art's sake and the principal exploiter of the "acte gratuit." But, in fact, Gide's new concept of purity seems to have largely retained its original sense of purging nonliterary irrelevancies. The main difference is that now the vague, ineffable forms of symbolism are purged, along with the irrelevant pictorialism of earlier modes, as alike hostile to true art. For the novel at least, the norm is to be transparency, an art that conceals itself, not by

[14] "An Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men" (1743), in *Complete Works of Henry Fielding*, ed. William Ernest Henley (London, 1903), XIV, 281-305, esp. 286-287. See below, p. 8.

[15] "Le Roman d'aventure," *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (1913), I, 932, cited by William M. Peterson, "Gide and Defoe," *NQ*, CXCVII (1952), 202.

[16] *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs*, (Paris, 1929), p. 74; the entry is dated 1 November [1922].

rendering nature as ambiguously artificial but by displaying itself as naturally as possible. Gide reveals the norm in a comment on Defoe's *Colonel Jacque*: "Cela est beau comme la vie elle-même; l'art qui la présente et la couvre ne peut être plus discret ni plus transparent."[17] Through the unobtrusive covering of art will shine the quintessential act with its motives, its consequences, and, given Gide's Calvinism, its eventual gratuitousness.[18]

The concept of pure action, however, was only part of the formal levy made by Gide on the eighteenth-century English novel. There was also the important question of what "tone" was proper to prose fiction. For this, too, Gide found an answer in the novel of action: "Pourquoi me dissimuler: ce qui me tente, c'est le genre épique. Seul, le ton de l'épopée me convient et me peut satisfaire; peut sortir le roman de son ornière réaliste."[19] Exactly what this epic tone is, he never makes explicit. Impersonal, detached, disinterested, one may infer, but not altogether so. Purged of the didactic tendentiousness of the naturalistic novel, certainly, but not at the sacrifice of all personal focus. It may help to recall Stephen Daedalus' definition of the epic as that form in which the artist presents his image "in mediate relation to himself and to others." In the fully developed epic the emotional center of gravity is "equidistant from the artist himself and from others," the narrative is no longer personal, and "the personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea."[20] Some such "mediate" placement of the narrator with respect to the materials of his narration seems to have been central to Gide's conception of epic tone. In the *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs* (1926) he distinguishes between the bad novelist, who "construit ses personnages . . . les dirige et les fait parler," and the good novelist, who merely listens to them, watches them act, eavesdrops on them, so to speak.[21]

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[17] *Journal, 1889-1939*, p. 742, dated 5 September [1922].

[18] It would be interesting to explore the connections (if any) between Gide's Calvinism and the concept of "l'action gratuite." C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 32-36, notes that prepuritan Protestantism and early Calvinism were not ascetic but sensualist, and that both embraced the belief that no action could deserve Heaven which was done in order to purchase Heaven. This emphasis on the unmotivated impulse, so to speak, has prompted William Empson, "*Tom Jones*," *Kenyon Review*, XX (1958), 226, to inquire about Fielding's connections with Calvinism. In Fielding's case seventeenth-century latitudinarianism would doubtless provide the clue.

[19] *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs*, p. 68, dated August, 1921.

[20] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Compass Books (New York, 1956), pp. 213-215.

[21] *Op. cit.*, pp. 97-98, dated 27 May [1924]. For the author's relationship to his readers, see p. 80.

This is not quite the pure and transparent art of Defoe. Gide's distinction has much the sound of a primitive formula for comic distance. It is not surprising, therefore, that Fielding, not Defoe, seems to have had the greater immediate influence on the shaping of *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*. After rereading *Tom Jones* in 1924, Gide found himself again

> en face de mes *Faux-Monnayeurs*; mais cette courte plongée dans Fielding m'éclaire sur les insuffisances de mon livre. Je doute si je ne devrais pas élargir le texte, intervenir (malgré ce que me dit Martin du Gard), commenter.[22]

Whatever the reason for the change, *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* does make use of a more "mediate" narrative mode with frequent authorial intrusions than that of the earlier *récits* with their first-person interior point of view and "diary" narration. That Gide's book does not strikingly resemble the novels of either Defoe or Fielding does not necessarily invalidate the claim of general influence. Most critics, for example, have not understood that, in his interstitial essays in *Tom Jones,* Fielding was writing (among other things) a kind of poetics of the novel *in* the novel. It is not likely, therefore, that they will have seen what Gide saw there, namely, a device like the play within a play or, more appropriately for Fielding, the classic rhetorical gambit of a "received" text or "discovered" manuscript (as in *Don Quixote*) about which the narrator then speaks as if it had "real," spatial existence independent of himself. To the pure action and transparent art of Defoe, then, Gide has added the rhetorical possibilities for intervention of Fielding's comic epic in prose. And the possibilities are significant.

For the consideration of Gide's particular interest in Fielding as distinguished from his general interest in the epic of action, two brief writings are important: the "Travels in English Literature" and the little-known "Notes en Manière d'un Préface à *Tom Jones,*" both published in 1938. Almost a dozen years earlier, in the *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs,* Gide had attacked the conventional comparison of Fielding and Richardson: "Longtemps on a pu croire que Fielding et Richardson occupaient les deux poles opposés. A vrai dire, l'un est autant que l'autre réaliste."[23] In the "Travels" he goes further:

> When I read Clarissa Harlowe later on, how much astonished I was by the antagonistic position assigned to these two rival novelists—Fielding representing realism and Richardson idealism. This is really too much of a misconception and the religious point of view has distorted the whole question. Fielding is anti-religious, but Richardson, though religious, or appearing to be so, is far more of a realist than he.[24]

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 92, dated 14 February [1924].
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 68, dated August, 1921.
[24] *Verve*, I, No. 2 (Spring 1938), 15.

The passage raises two main points—Richardson's superior realism and Fielding's deeper secularism—and implies that the two are not interdependent in the way they were customarily taken to be.

To begin with the point of lesser importance, Gide is clearly not using "realism" here in the same sense in which he used its cognates to describe the pure action of the epic or the transparent art of Defoe. In these latter cases "realism" has a formalist sense; it is used to describe a modal strategy, a technique. In the case of Richardson, however, Gide gives "realism" a contentual sense; it refers not so much to the narrative method, the placement of the emotional center of gravity, as to the materials which are narrated. Richardson's epistolary technique, for example, raises the point in its first, or formalist, sense; his investigation of relatively unexplored areas of life raises the point in its second, or contentual, sense. Modern critics are more and more inclined to assent to Richardson's superior realism in the contentual sense, and to label "real" the sex, sadism, and sin of *Clarissa Harlowe*. Similar qualities in Fielding, despite the greater expansiveness of his world, do not attract this label. The role of property in *Clarissa Harlowe* has received rather thoughtful Marxist analysis;[25] such an analysis of *Tom Jones* would seem almost a joke.

Gide has tried to isolate what it is that, in this respect, makes Fielding less realistic, less "modern," than his contemporary. In an earlier passage in the "Travels" he praises Fielding's power of simplification, "what Nietszche calls 'the erosion of contours,' " and states that this power enables Fielding at times to take his place beside Molière. This is, of course, high praise. For Gide the French drama of the seventeenth century represented an unusual modal purity. But it is precisely Fielding's supposed power of mirroring the one clear, universal light (at the expense of the opaque and idiosyncratic) that cannot be called "realistic" when compared with Richardson's sluggish particularity.[26]

The assertion of Fielding's antireligiousness[27] is probably a more important, certainly a more iconoclastic, point than that of his inferior

[25] Christopher Hill, "Clarissa Harlowe and Her Times," *Essays in Criticism*, V (1955), 315-340.

[26] For complementary accounts of the novel's commitment to particularity and duration, see T. H. Green, "An Estimate of the Value and Influence of Works of Fiction in Modern Times" (1862), *Works*, ed. R. H. Nettleship (London, 1888), III, 30-36; and Ortega y Gasset, "Notes on the Novel," *The Dehumanization of Art*, (New York, 1956), pp. 53-95.

[27] It has been suggested that secularism, not antireligiousness, is what Gide meant to refer to in Fielding. Inasmuch as the "Travels" does not appear to have been published in French, Dorothy Bussey's translation ("anti-religious") has not been verified. However, Gide's prefatory remarks on *Tom Jones*, alluded to below, suggest a sense in which "anti-religious" might not be too strong a word.

realism. The prevailing view of Fielding's ethical position insists strongly on both his earnestness and his orthodox Christianity, in sharp reaction to earlier views that he was either a deist or a "low" profligate. He is still allowed his parodies, even his double ironies, but underneath the fooling, it is claimed, is a kind of Augustan gospel singer.[28] Gide attacks this view as distorted. The distortion occurs, he would say, because most critics commit the error of equating religion with idealism, antireligion with realism. According to Gide, such equations are utterly false. Indeed, the distortion resulting from such claims of exclusive affiliation very much resembles the vulgar error resulting from the confusion of wit with levity and sober dullness with gravity.

In the "Travels" Gide offers no defense of his thesis that Fielding is antireligious. For such a defense we must turn to his prefatory notes to *Tom Jones*. According to an entry in the *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs* he first projected the preface in 1924 for a French translation of the novel to be published by Dent.[29] However, Gide rejected the translation as unsatisfactory, and the notes were apparently abandoned until, in the "Travels," he speaks of bringing them out "later." He affects to think well of them: "They put forward a number of psychological truths on which my heart is set and which are not generally recognized. I was glad to rediscover them in Fielding."[30] Since the notes seem not to have been noticed by students of either Gide or Fielding, they are here given in full:[31]

NOTES

EN MANIÈRE DE PRÉFACE

Il n'aime la vertu que naturelle; tout effort vers la perfection, dès que ne l'obtient plus naturellement l'amour, c'est l'orgueil qui l'exige et qui ne l'obtiendra qu'en nous dénaturant. Son peu de goût pour la sainteté l'apparente à Molière. Je ne dis pas que l'un, non plus que l'autre, ne soit capable d'admirer les saints; mais aucun des personnages qu'ils présentent n'aspire à devenir meilleur, à se vaincre, à traiter durement la "guenille" qui leur est chère, je veux dire: à se macérer. Les

[28] Empson, "*Tom Jones*," pp. 222, 226. See also James A. Work, "Henry Fielding, Christian Censor," in *The Age of Johnson: Essays presented to Chauncey Brewster Tinker* (New Haven, 1949), pp. 139-148; A. R. Towers, "Fielding and Dr. Samuel Clarke," *MLN*, LXX (1955), 257; George Sherburn, "Fielding's Social Outlook," *PQ*, XXXV (1956), 1-23.

[29] *Op. cit.*, p. 92.

[30] "Travels in English Literature," p. 15.

[31] "Notes en Manière de Préface," in Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones, Histoire d'un Enfant Trouvé*, trans. Defauconpret (Paris, 1938), [vii]-ix. Apparently first published in the year preceding that in which the translation appeared, as "Notes pour une Préface au *Tom Jones* de Fielding," among the "Feuillets" in *Œuvres Complètes*, XIII (1937), 412-416.

pires égarements de Tom Jones, ne sont jamais suivis de remords ou de repentirs; s'il les regrette, c'est qu'ils ont pu peiner Sophie.

"Par bon naturel j'entends cette bienveillante et admirable disposition d'esprit qui nous invite à compatir aux infortunes d'autrui et à nous réjouir de ses joies; et qui, partant, nous emploie à prévenir les unes, à provoquer les autres et ceci sans abstraite considération sur la beauté de la vertu, et sans l'aide de la vertu, et sans l'aide des promesses ou des menaces de la religion." (*Essay on the Characters of Men*, IX, pp. 408, 409.)

"Et même en admettant que nous puissions en toute innocence rire des folies et des vices de l'humanité (ce qui peut-être est déjà trop admettre), encore est-il que les infortunes et les misères, bien sûrement, ne sont pas un sujet de rire; or, de celles-ci le monde est plein, et rare est le jour qui passe sans offrir à l'homme de vraiment bon naturel de quoi moins rire que pleurer." (*Characters of Men*, p. 409.)

Le caractère d'Allworthy, sujet à caution. L'effort est toujours dangereux pour un romancier de nous bailler un parangon: Grandisson—même Muichkine risquait de s'y compromettre; il a fallu le tact profond de Dostoïevsky pour le sauver. Il est remarquable, du reste, que Fielding, qui n'aime point [p. viii] les êtres parfaits (non plus dans le bien que dans le mal) ait fait accompagner cette bonté d'un peu de sottise; malgré toute la sagesse théorique qu'il concède à son Allworthy, celui-ci est joué sans cesse. Il a tendance à croire les autres aussi bons que lui, et ne sait pas se défendre contre les ruses et les calomnies dont lui-même n'est pas capable, tant il est vrai que l'on ne connaît bien que les sentiments dont on a l'embryon tout au moins dans son cœur.

Et puis, et surtout, Allworthy est un portrait. Le modèle existait, à qui F. pensait payer une dette de reconnaissance. Si Allen, le prototype et modèle, fut si flatté (dit-on) de s'y reconnaître, c'est qu'il n'était, sans doute pas si parfait que cela.

Aujourd'hui que nous savons à l'excès que le dévot n'est pas toujours un hypocrite, les portraits de . . . nous touchent moins.

Mais n'est-il pas curieux que Fielding n'ait peint que faux dévots et que la vraie vertu ne soit jamais chez lui accompagnée de piété? (Mais peut-être ici que je m'avance un peu trop; vérifier d'abord très soigneusement).

Dès le premier chapitre de son histoire (*Tom Jones*), nous le voyons qui vole; mais ce n'est pas pour lui, c'est pour les autres. Pour lui, les reproches et la fessée; pour la famille de son ami le garde-chasse, les prunes et le canard dérobés.

Peu de temps après nous le voyons mentir; mais c'est pour protéger ce même garde et prendre sur lui seul la responsabilité d'un acte illégal qu'ils ont commis ensemble. Dans la crainte du châtiment dont on le menace alors, il passe une nuit blanche; mais, nous est-il dit aussitôt, ce n'est pas la douleur qu'il redoute, c'est de ne la savoir endurer et de laisser échapper sous le fouet ce qu'il met un amical point d'honneur à taire: le nom de son complice (qui, nous est-il dit plaisamment, passe également une nuit blanche, tourmenté d'une semblable crainte, mais encore plus soucieux de l'honneur de l'enfant que de sa peau). Mais Tom résiste; il "préfère se laisser écorcher plutôt que de trahir son ami et de violer sa promesse".

Allworthy, qui ordonnait le châtiment, estime que celui-ci dépasse la faute, car il ne voit, après tout, dans l'obstination de Tom à garder le silence, qu'un "point d'honneur mal placé".

"L'honneur, s'écrie aussitôt X., qui tient ici l'emploi de ministre des hautes œuvres, . . . l'honneur peut-il enseigner à mentir? ou peut-il exister en dehors de la religion?"

Il met les lecteurs dans le secret de certains caractères tout en leur demandant de ne point abuser de cette confidence, les avertissant, d'autre part, qu' "ils se tromperaient, s'ils pensaient qu'une plus longue accointance, les aurait mis à même de découvrir ce que son inspiration seule lui a permis de connaître". (Livre III, Chap. V.)

"Si le succès ne répondit pas à l'attente, il faut s'en prendre sans doute à quelque vice secret dans le project—vice que je laisse au lecteur la permission [p. ix] de découvrir, s'il le peut—car nous ne prétendons présenter aucun caractère parfait dans cette chronique; où nous espérons que l'on ne puisse trouver rien qui n'ait trouvé modèle en l'humaine nature." (III, Chap. V.)

"Encore que certainement, si monstrueux que cela paraisse, elle détestât son propre enfant, ce dont, j'en ai l'assurance, elle n'est pas le seul exemple." (III, Chap. V.)

ANDRÉ GIDE

Gide begins conventionally enough by pointing to the Pelagian concept of good nature as the basis of Fielding's ethical system. The "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men," on which Gide relies heavily in his notes, describes good nature as an almost empathic transcendence of self, a mutuality of feeling with others. Motivated by unselfish love and marked by compassion, good nature is the very opposite of Hobbesian egotism, although the latter may take the superficially similar form of good humor. Good humor the "Essay" defines as a competitive striving for perfection, a selfish coveting of superiority to others, motivated by pride and marked, when successful, by a kind of Hobbesian "sudden glory." Its diagnostic, to recall Fielding's word, is a "glavering smile," whose object is the miseries and misfortunes of others.[32]

The next important point Gide makes about good nature is that Fielding conceived it as an absolutely uncompelled disposition in the mind. The initial quotation from the "Essay" explicitly divorces good nature from abstract universals like the naked beauty of virtue, on the one hand, and from the more corporeal threats of equally abstract religious dogmas, on the other. Good nature is thus neither the innate principle of a homogeneous universe (as Square proposes) nor the acquired faith of a compulsive theology (as Thwackum proposes). Indeed, the "Essay" itself opens by insisting on the immense variety in human nature and the consequent pointlessness of making any predications about mankind in general. The *plenum formarum* of the physical universe has its counterpoise in the equally multiform nature of the mind or spirit. Furthermore, the cause of this infinite variety is independent of training or environment. Fielding calls it an "unacquir-

[32] *Works*, ed. Henley, XIV, 286.

ed, original distinction" in the nature of men, and says it accounts for "that very early and strong inclination to good or evil, which distinguishes different dispositions in children . . . in the most uninformed savages . . . and, lastly, in persons, who, from the same education &c., might be thought to have directed nature the same way."[33] Tom Jones and Blifil provide almost a casebook illustration.[34] Some of Fielding's near contemporaries (e.g., Johnson and Hawkins) took passages and illustrations like these to mean that Fielding believed good actions proceeded from a good heart, not from good principles. They concluded, with Gide, that Fielding was hardly orthodox.

Gide next develops the corollary notion of Fielding's mistrust of perfection. As Gide presents it, perfection is for Fielding something of a denaturing process, a denial of real elements in human nature. Presumably the "mixed" world of man, so resistant to generalizations of any kind, will not tolerate the imposition of such absolutes as perfection. Remarking on Fielding's resemblance to Molière in this respect, Gide asserts that neither writer is much interested in characters who aspire to self-betterment, who macerate their passional or instinctual parts in order to achieve it. As Fielding's novels abundantly illustrate, this is what perfection involves—the compulsive denial of the demands of the body. In this sense, then, perfection is unnatural. And failure to achieve it, Gide observes, does not exactly strike spiritual remorse into the soul of Tom Jones, who worries, rather, about the possible effects on his beloved.

As Gide is well aware, however, the crucial test of the case against perfectionism in Fielding is Squire Allworthy. The conventional complaint about the squire is that he is too good to be true, too much of a compliment to Ralph Allen to be credible. Although Gide eventually tries to have it several ways, he begins by showing that Allworthy's supposed perfection is in fact a good deal qualified. To the squire's theoretical wisdom is added an alloy of obtuseness, the product, one may infer, of his habit of first judging human nature on abstract grounds, that is, according to principle. In so doing, of course, he runs counter to the contention of the "Essay" that variety, not principle, prevails in human nature. What happens to Allworthy's absolutism when confronted by the ambiguities of life may be illustrated by a short history of the pluralistic concept of honor, materials for which Gide thoughtfully provides in his résumé of Jones' early career.

In the matter of the stolen duck and the apples, Tom's sense of honor towards Black George, his social inferior, is traditional, almost aristo-

[33] *Ibid.*, XIV, 281-282.
[34] Sherburn, "Fielding's Social Outlook," p. 8.

cratic in its paternalism. Allworthy, landowner and latter-day aristocrat himself, comes slowly to recognize this. But he is also a magistrate, a servant of social law, and as such he must judge that Tom's honor lies technically outside the law. Enter Thwackum with still another conception of honor (the theological or pious), and the pluralism is complete. The point of it, of course, is not that men should abandon any and all principles whatsoever, but merely that any system or theory based on the unqualified application of principles or absolutes is inimical to the "mixed" state of human nature. An equivocal world, Fielding seems to be saying, cannot abide univocal modes of operation.

The final step in the "proof" of Fielding's reservations concerning formal religion is to show that the virtue of good nature is never associated with that special form of perfection called piety. Such, indeed, was the burden of Gide's first quotation from the "Essay." He now calls attention to the curious fact that such an association is never made in *Tom Jones*. Religious zealots, if they are associated with anything, are associated with falseness, the imposture of gravity. In Fielding, as the example of Blifil attests, hypocrisy loves to wear the long face. To note this is not to suppose that Fielding believed all religious devotion hypocritical, all religions false. But it does draw attention to the fact that Fielding does not affirm the reverse. In other words, there is no necessary or intrinsic connection between good nature and formal religion, although, as in the case of Parson Adams, for example, the two may be occasionally juxtaposed. Ironically enough, the crushing illustration of Fielding's antiformalism is provided by the would-be proselytist, Thwackum. Confronted by the fact of Tom's "mixed" honor (it has apparently assimilated both lying and theft), Thwackum puts the crucial question: " . . . can any honor exist independent of religion?"[35] Fielding's answer, as Gide properly saw, was in the affirmative. In the fiction of Fielding it not only can, it does, though it need not.

Almost thrown away, as it were, among the psychological truths Gide was glad to rediscover in Fielding is the second and final point of the prefatory notes—the rhetorical management of the intrusive author, what for Gide constituted the epic "tone." Although largely sacrificed to the clinching of the argument for Fielding's antiformalist bias, the point is an important one, with which Gide was preoccupied during the composition of *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*. The fact that he intrudes it, however irrelevantly, here in the notes may excuse a recapitulation, in different terms, of the significance it had for him.

"Gide," remarked Paul Claudel, "est fasciné par les miroirs. Son

[35] III, ii, Modern Library ed. (New York, n.d.), p. 82.

Journal n'est qu'une série de poses devant lui-même."[36] The remark was meant pejoratively, of course, but it offers a clue to the connection between Gide's psychology and his aesthetic. Huxley's *Point Counter Point* notwithstanding, it is optics, not music, that tells us most about Gide's writing. And not simply optics in general, but the particular possibilities of the mirror. Claudel's remark may be extended well beyond the *Journal*. The novels and the earlier *récits* also have about them the diary touch; collectively, they too form a protracted series of self-posturings. However, Gide had an aesthetic to go with this supposed narcissism, and he had it early in his career. In a *Journal* entry for 1893, apropos of *La Tentative Amoureuse*, he wrote, "J'aime assez qu'en une œuvre d'art, on retrouve ainsi transposé, à l'échelle des personnages, le sujet même de cette œuvre." Examples he cites are paintings in which "un petit miroir convexe et sombre reflète, à son tour, l'intérieur de la pièce où se joue la scène peinte"; the play within a play of *Hamlet*; and most apposite of all, he feels, the device of heraldry that consists of setting within the escutcheon a smaller one "en abyme" at the heart point.[37]

For Gide, the ideal work of art must contain within it a paradigm or parody of itself. Properly devised, such a parody will appear to resolve the rivalry between the real world and the representation art makes of it in favor of the artistic representation. The effect is achieved by heightening the superlative and minute artifice of the parody, so that what surrounds it, the bulk of the total work, seems "real" by comparison. This is one of the effects of the so-called digressions of the Old Man of the Hill and the King of the Gypsies in *Tom Jones*. To invoke the Gidean optics, it is the effect of reduplicating mirrors, in which the image of the immediate foreground (the almost life-sized image in what we tend to think of as the "first" mirror) seems more "real" than any others in the infinite series of smaller counterfeits "within" or "behind" it. "Seems," of course, not "is." Because the apparent triumph of art is pure trickery. Itself at one remove from the original, the "first" image of the mirror series is thus no less artificial than the others.

Even the effect of parody, however, is not the ultimate effect in either *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* or *Tom Jones*. The ultimate effect occurs when to the element of parody is added the sense of an intrusive "author" devising and distorting the perspectives of the supposed narrative reality. That this second effect is different from, though related to, that

[36] "Fragment d'une Interview de Paul Claudel par Dominique Arban" (28 March 1947), in *Paul Claudel et André Gide: Correspondance, 1899-1926*, ed. Robert Mallet, 29th ed. (Paris, 1949), p. 250.

[37] *Journal, 1889-1939*, p. 41, dated from La Roque, apparently in August.

of plain parody may be seen by comparing *Hamlet* with, say, Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. In more conventional drama, as Stephen Daedalus saw, the artist-author is impersonalized out of existence. This resolves the dualism between art and life by annihilating one of the parties to it. As Gide said of *Colonel Jacque*, the covering of art is so transparent, so reticent, that it almost escapes apprehension. The field is left to "life," so to speak. But in modes where the intrusion of the author becomes an aesthetic principle, is made part of the subject matter, there the effect is a good deal more complicated. What happens is a kind of aesthetic chiasmus. The "author," who in more conventional modes stands for his craft (art) in an invisible and rather mysterious way, now is actually seen working, as it were, commenting on his devices. He comes in effect to stand for the "reality" that we always suspected was behind the mystery of artifice. On the other hand, the narrative materials, which in conventional modes shine lifelike through the transparency of art, are now seen as what the visible craftsman has been devising, the object of his craft, in a word, art. Thus the parties to the dualism appear to have exchanged significations. To put it another way, the dualism now appears resolved, not by the denial of the claims of one of its parties, but by the strange ambiguity of the claims of both. For writers of epochs faced with exhausted or outmoded forms, such distortions by formal device have had an important function. By confusing the reader as to what is reality and what is distortion of artifice, they seek to arouse his curiosity to examine the claims of each in a new light.

This perhaps overformalistic account may be fittingly concluded by considering a second dualism implied by the reduplicative device of an artist at work within an art work—fittingly, because the subjective-objective dualism permits the addition, to a formalistic account, of some important psychological and historical considerations. In art, said Oscar Wilde, it is the spectator, not life, that matters. In intention an expression of faith in art for art's sake, Wilde's dictum was also an unwitting presage of things to come, an unintended pioneer excuse for the "closed world" of modern psychological art. Art for art's sake resolved the dualism of life and art by a complete severance of the two ("As for living, our servants can do that for us"), with the preference to art. The later, more psychological, theory brought the severed parties together again by letting the spectator assimilate life, so to speak. In effect this transformed the dualism of art and life into one of subjectivity and objectivity, and raised the charge of solipsism against those who let the spectator make everything over in his own image. As has been pointed

out, Gide had too much of a regard for the relish of life to deny it a function in his aesthetic. On the other hand, because he had such a persistent weakness for it, he was continually being warned (by Wilde, among others) about the dangers of the "I" point of view. These were extremes to be avoided as carefully as he avoided the mirror in the roadway of the nineteenth-century naturalists.

To equilibrate the need for personal involvement with the aim of at least a qualified objectivity, Gide sought a mode in which the emotional center of gravity was equidistant from the artist himself and from his materials. This epic tone, as he called it, he found most suitable in Fielding's picaresque variant. *Tom Jones* especially, with its combination of an "author" within the novel and parody *en abyme*, must have satisfied Gide's psychological ambivalence—his narcissistic desire to be involved, on the one hand, and his voyeuristic need to be detached, to act gratuitously, on the other. There are other, larger relevances, of course. For a writer whose image of himself was that of a creature of dualisms, whose image of art was that of a series of dialogues postured reduplicatively in front of a set of mirrors—for such a writer what more natural than to seek out a literature whose aesthetic exploited the ambiguities in holding the mirror up to life ("Nature and Homer were, he found, the same"), whose rhetoric could be designated as the "mirror-faculty of dialogue" (Shaftesbury),[38] and whose rage for order included almost all the known devices of counterfeiting?

These relevances should be clear. What chronology seems to forbid, however, is that the relevances run the other way, that there be reciprocity, so to speak. Still, the relationship between Gide and Fielding need not be altogether one-sided after all. If Gide's observations merely encourage a fresh way of looking at Fielding—if, for example, they discourage us from referring to the essays in *Tom Jones* as literary prattle,"[39] from pushing too hard on the Christian censor view of Fielding's earnestness and orthodoxy, from neglecting so completely the important function of rhetoric in the eighteenth-century English novel[40]—then perhaps we may hope for a more satisfactory critical appraisal of Fielding than we now have. It is overdue.

Wesleyan University

[38] For the Augustan context of Shaftesbury's rhetoric, see my article, "The Background of Fielding's Laughter," forthcoming in *ELH*.

[39] Empson, "*Tom Jones*," pp. 233, 248.

[40] But see Victor Lange, "Erzählformen im Roman des Achtzehnten Jahrhunderts," *Anglia*, LXXVI (1958), 129-144. Lange comments briefly on rhetorical elements in Fielding's fiction and provides a larger context than that of the English novel.

NORMAN N. HOLLAND

Measure for Measure: The Duke And The Prince

IN *Measure for Measure,* Shakespeare departed from his sources to transform the Duke from a distant, detached symbol of justice into a ruler who, from behind the scenes, manipulates the other characters much as a dramatist would. In particular, he made the Duke's appointment of Angelo as his deputy an elaborate and special transaction, and devoted an entire scene (I, iii) to an explanation of the Duke's private, as opposed to his public, motives (I, i, 28 ff.). No one has, as yet, suggested the origins of Shakespeare's novel treatment of this appointment, or its role in the moral ambiguity of the play. Machiavelli, I think, provides a clue.

Il Principe tells a rather striking story with certain parallels to Angelo's situation, a story that sticks in the mind for its gruesome ending. When Cesare Borgia took the Romagna (which had previously been governed by weak rulers), he resolved to govern firmly. He therefore appointed as his governor

> messer Remirro de Orco, uomo crudele ed espedito, al quale dette pienissima potestà. Costui in poco tempo la ridusse pacifica e unita, con grandissima reputazione. Dipoi iudicò el duca non essere necessario sì eccessiva autorità, perché dubitava non divenissi odiosa; . . . E perché conosceva le rigorosità passate averli generato qualche odio, per purgare gli animi di quelli populi e guadagnarseli in tutto, volle monstrare che, se crudeltà alcuna era seguita, non era nata da lui ma dalla acerba natura del ministro. E, presa sopr'a questo occasione, lo fece a Cesena, una mattina, mettere in dua pezzi in sulla piazza, con uno pezzo di legno e uno coltello sanguinoso a canto. La ferocità del quale spettaculo fece quelli populi in uno tempo rimanere satisfatti e stupidi.[1]

[1] Niccolo Machiavelli, *Il Principe,* VII.

While Shakespeare's Duke is no Machiavellian prince, still he does, like Borgia, appoint a deputy to do an unpleasant job with which he himself does not wish to be associated (*Meas.*, I, iii, 19-43).

It is unlikely that Shakespeare himself read Machiavelli; no English translation was published until 1640, and Shakespeare probably did not know Italian.[2] It is rather more likely that he read the so-called "Anti-Machiavel" of Innocent Gentillet (1576), which had been published in an English translation in 1602,[3] somewhat over a year before Shakespeare began *Measure for Measure*.

Gentillet bitterly attacks Machiavelli's position from the standpoint of traditional mediaeval and Renaissance ideas of government. Point by point, he restates Machiavelli's advice to the prince, making Machiavelli seem even worse than he normally does, and then comments on the advice, alternating between solemn platitudes and indignant scorn. Gentillet's prose, even in translation, splutters. The episode of Messer Remirro de Orco seems particularly to have irritated him, for he deals with it three times:

> Having thus suppressed those two Factions, and seeing himselfe peaceable and [*sic*; 1608 ed.: peaceably possessed of] all Romania and the dutchie of Vrbin; to make himselfe feared, & to represse the insolencies of the pettie lords of that countrey, hee [Caesar Borgia] sent thither, for governour, *Messiere Remiro Dorco* (a severe and cruell man) unto whom he gave full power: Who exercising his crueltie, committed many executions, by meanes whereof, he with feare made all the countrey tremble, and so, as peaceable and obedient as might be. What then did *Borgia?* To make the world beleeve, that such cruell executions were not done by his commaund nor by his consent, suddainly he caused publickely the head of *Messier Romiro* to be cut off.[4]

Shakespeare's Duke threatens to have Angelo beheaded, not cut in half; just possibly this constitutes further evidence that Shakespeare knew the story of Remirro de Orco only through Gentillet.

> But whereas *Borgea* (saith hee [Machiavelli]) caused the head to bee taken from *Messier Romiro Dorco*, the executioner of his crueltie; I confesse it was true, and vow, that hee did well therein: For if *Messier Romiro*, would excuse himselfe and say, that his master *Borgia* commanded him to do such cruell executions; that were no good excuse, because hee should rather have forsaken his estate and gov-

[2] See Selma Guttman, *Shakespeare's Foreign Sources* (New York, 1947), pp. xi-xii, and Mario Praz, *Machiavelli and the Elizabethans* (London, 1928), pp. 25, 30-32.

[3] Innocent Gentillet, *A discourse vpon the meanes of wel governing and maintaining in good peace, a kingdome, or other principalitie. Divided into three parts, namely, The Counsell, The Religion, and the Policie, which a Prince ought to hold and follow, Against Nicholas Machiavell the Florentine*, translated into English by Simon Patericke, (London, 1602).

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

ernment, than to commit cruelties, without any forme of justice, against the law of God and reason: The civile lawes themselves willeth, that none should obey his prince, when hee commandeth any massacre or unjust slaughter, till thirtie daies bee past after the command; that in the meane time either their friends, or the magistrate, may persuade the prince to pacifie his choller, and to hearken unto reason ... It is then seene by this law, that *Messier Romiro* was justly punished, as a man too prompt and forward to execute crueltie.[5]

Gentillet deals with Messer Remirro a third time when he discusses what he calls Machiavelli's "Maxime 34": "A Prince ought to commit to others those affaires which are subject to hatred and envie, and reserve to himselfe such as depend upon his grace and favour."

A Prince which will exercise some cruell and rigorous act (saith *M. Nicholas*) he ought to give the commission thereof unto some other; to the end, he may not acquire evil will and enmitie by it. And yet if he feare, that such a delegation cannot bee wholly exempted from blame (to have consented to the execution which was made by his Commissarie) he may cause the Commissarie to be slaine, to shew that he consented not to his crueltie, as did *Caesar Borgia*, and *Messire Remiro Dorco*.

This Maxime is a dependancie of that goodly doctrine, which *Machiavell* learned of *Caesar Borgia* (which although it was very cruell) yet meaning to appeare soft and gentle, following therein the Maxime which enjoyneth dissimulation, committeth the execution of his crueltie to *Messire Remiro Dorco*, as at large before we have discoursed that hystorie. And because we have fully shewed, that all dissimulation and feignednesse is unworthie of a prince, we will stay no longer upon this Maxime: Well will I confess, that many things there be which seeme to be rigorous in execution (although they be most equall and just) which it is good a prince doe commit to others, to give judgement and execution by justice, as the case meriteth: For as the emperour *Marcus Antonine* said, It seemeth to the world, that that which the prince doth, hee doth it by his absolute authoritie and power, rather than of his civile and reasonable power. Therefore to shun that blame and suspition, it is good that the prince delegate and set over such matters to Iudges, which are good men, not suspected nor passionate, not doing as the emperour *Valentinian* did, who would never heare nor receive accusations against Iudges and Magistrates, which hee had established, but constrained the recusators or refusers, to end their cause before those Iudges only: Whereby he was much blamed and his honor impeached and disgraced: For truly, the cheefe point which is required to cause good justice to be administered, is, That Iudges be not suspected nor passionat: because the passions of the soule and heart do obfuscate and trouble the judgement of the understanding, and cause them to step aside and stray out of the way.[6]

Gentillet, in these three treatments of the story, touches on a number of the major and minor points of *Measure for Measure*. For example, in V, i, 165-166 and 256-257, the Duke makes Angelo the judge of Isabella's accusation against him, just as Gentillet said Valentinian did. And, as Gentillet criticized Valentinian, the Duke in his disguise as

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 188.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

Friar Lodowick says, "The Duke's unjust to . . . put your trial in the villain's mouth, Which here you come to accuse" (V, i, 302-305). Gentillet thought "*Messier Romiro* was justly punished, as a man too prompt and forward to execute crueltie." That is precisely the reason the Duke gives when he threatens to punish the Provost in the final dealing out of justice (V, i, 462-467), and when he pretends to condemn Angelo in the passage which is the only one in the play that mentions the title:

> Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
> Like does quit like, and *Measure* still *for Measure*.
> (V, i, 415-416)

Despite the striking differences in tone and outcome, the underlying situations in *Measure for Measure* and the episode of "Messiere Remiro de Orco" are the same; in each, the ruler appoints a deputy to do an unpopular job. In the scene (I, iii) in which he explains the appointment, Shakespeare's Duke gives, in all, four reasons for making Angelo his deputy: he wants to enforce "most biting laws" that have fallen into disuse (19-21); he cannot enforce them himself, because he would be tyrannous in punishing what he himself had permitted (35-39); he wants to pass on to Angelo the slander that such belated enforcement will produce (39-43);[7] finally, he wants to test the angelic Angelo (50-54).

All four of these reasons appear in Gentillet's treatment of the story of Remirro de Orco. First is Borgia's need "to make himself feared, and to represse the insolencies of the pettie lords of that countrey," such as Claudio and Lucio. Borgia's belief that, in order " . . . to shun that blame and suspition, it is good that the prince delegate and set over such matters to Iudges" is parallel to the Duke's second reason: fear that his own enforcing of the law would be "too dreadful." Borgia's desire to avoid "evil will and enmitie" by having de Orco execute his severities is the same as the Duke's third reason. And, as Gentillet's pious hope that "Iudges be not suspected nor passionat" applies to Angelo, it gives the Duke's fourth reason for appointing him—"to see what these seemers be." (In one of the comic scenes of the play, the paronomastic Elbow mixes "suspected" with "respected" [II, i, 169-188] in a capsule statement of this most basic theme of the play.)

Another basic theme of *Measure for Measure* is the sense of government as drama that creates and justifies the friar-Duke's dissimulation, so puzzling to critics evaluating this "good" ruler. His schemes

[7] See my note, " 'Do' or 'Die' in *Measure for Measure*, I, iii, 43," *Notes and Queries*, n.s., IV (1957), 52.

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and pretenses, as Miss Mary Lascelles has pointed out, make a kind of "interlude of justice."[8] The Duke's delegation of his authority to Angelo, Angelo's arrest of Claudio as an example, the friar-Duke's actions as a stage setter, the Duke's public entrance into Vienna on his return, Isabella's pleading for Angelo, and the final public meting out of justice —all these actions are contrived to produce a dramatic effect on the public. All, in a sense, are dramatic actions. Gentillet's pious platitude, that "all dissimulation and feignednesse is unworthie of a prince," makes a pitifully inadequate answer to Machiavelli's shrewd awareness of the need for dramatic effects in government—exemplified by the gruesome spectacle of two halves of Remirro de Orco in the public square at Cesena. Shakespeare's Duke is on Machiavelli's side—at least insofar as he accepts the necessity for dissimulation in government.

Measure for Measure, as its opening lines suggest, is pre-eminently a play about "the properties of government," and it would be the most natural thing in the world for Shakespeare, when planning such a play, to read the version available to him of the Renaissance's most notorious treatise on government. Even if he only heard or recalled de Orco's pitiful story, interpretations of *Measure for Measure* that treat the Duke as a symbol of divine grace or the like must take into account his probable descent from Cesare Borgia.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

[8] Mary Lascelles, *Shakespeare's Measure for Measure* (London, 1953), generally.

JOHN HENRY RALEIGH

The New Criticism As an Historical Phenomenon

THE ERA of the New Criticism, everyone agrees, is over. Its beneficial effects, which are many, will we hope be permanent—its sins interred with its bones. One of the founders, T. S. Eliot, has already written an apologia and an historical analysis of the movement as a whole.[1] According to Eliot, it was the method and attitude of Coleridge, the first great critic in English to employ such extraliterary disciplines as philosophy, aesthetics, and psychology in the study of literature, that has stimulated the extraliterary interests of modern criticism in the social sciences, linguistics, and semantics. The other principal impetus of the New Criticism, according to Eliot, has been the search for "origins."

René Wellek has also pointed to a twofold impulse behind the New Criticism, but his analysis differs from Eliot's. According to Wellek, there were "two groups: those who have more and more brought to bear on literature all kinds of knowledge—psychoanalysis, Marxism, and recently anthropology; and those who have tried to study literature as an aesthetic fact."[2] Wellek's formulations seem to be more just and more accurate than Eliot's, since the concern for origins is surely an inheritance from the late nineteenth century and not something peculiar to the twentieth. Certainly Wellek's two poles—psychoanalysis, anthropology, theory of language (extrinsic interests), at one extreme, and

[1] T. S. Eliot, *The Frontiers of Criticism*, Gideon Seymour Memorial Lecture at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 1956).

[2] René Wellek, "Literary Scholarship," in *American Scholarship in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Merle Curti (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 111-145. See especially pp. 120-122.

precise linguistic analysis (intrinsic interests), at the other—define the general areas of activity of the New Criticism. Eliot himself, who is the father of practically all modern critics, even the Oedipal critics, once remarked in his early magisterial manner that the perfect critic should have at his disposal vast learning but that in his actual criticism he should be scrupulously concerned with the text; in this exhortation he launched the whole movement. But neither Eliot's nor Wellek's formulations, since they are largely descriptions, tell us much about the New Criticism as an historical phenomenon—what the forces behind it were, and why it was so remarkably successful.

The New Criticism emerged from the historical context of the early twentieth century and, as such, is an amalgam of certain forces that were predominant in that era. Viewed historically, Eliot, Richards, and the other principal critics of the group look less like idiosyncratic individuals and more like vessels for certain general tendencies of their age.

In the long run, I believe, the New Criticism will appear to be a curious and paradoxical blend of two great and supposedly antithetical forces—art and science, or, more precisely, aestheticism and scientific method. The New Criticism was a salutary, illogical, mistaken, and fruitful union of the two forces, which had been split since the Renaissance. It was Eliot, a poet, and Richards, a Benthamite, who inaugurated the movement: a poet with concern for the holiness of words and a psychologist with concern for their neurological effect; the sacred rage of an artist and the objective dispassionateness of a scientist. The bridge between them was furnished by a third power, the semanticism that prevailed not only in literary and rhetorical studies in the early twentieth century but in philosophy and psychoanalysis as well. Eliot himself furthered the "scientific" bent of the New Criticism and, as a critic, was always, in his early days at least, the cool, objective observer whose only mission was to state things as precisely as possible and without the verbal flights in which the "art" of criticism had formerly indulged. The central analogy of "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is that of the "finely filiated" platinum catalyst effecting "sulphurous acid" out of "oxygen" and "sulphur dioxide." The ancillary disciplines that the New Criticism mainly employed were not historical and humanistic studies, such as philosophy or aesthetics, but nascent sciences, such as anthropology and psychoanalysis.

The practice of the New Criticism generally, at least in its epigonous manifestations, bears all the earmarks, and at times the stigmata, of professionalism and scientism. There are the continuous protestations

of "objectivity"—poetry constitutes a precise, "scientific" statement about human emotions that the language of science proper is too blunt, rationalistic, and abstract to make; there is the special vocabulary; there is the professional transmission of the skills to the next generation, just as the nineteenth-century scholars, in avowed imitation of the methods of science, trained their successors; there is the narrowing down of the subject to the short lyric, precisely and exhaustively described, just as scientists isolate for pragmatic examination small parts of large problems; there is the tendency to separate the subject, poetry, from all human and historical, and thus variable, factors—the "intentional fallacy"—as if poetry were some bright, isolable gem, separable from its author and from history, to be examined with a microscope under a pure white light; there is the sense of the deep and intense cooperation between the various practitioners, accompanied by the air of *expertise* and contempt for the outsider and the uninitiated. (Randall Jarrell mockingly exclaimed in his brilliant, witty, one-sided attack: "I'd just never *read* 'We Are Seven' till I got So-and-So's analysis of it for Christmas.") There is finally the almost conspiratorial air and the mystique that always accompanies highly professionalized endeavor. The delicate impressionism, the wild, irrational response, the barbaric yawp of criticism as an "art" disappears behind a collective professionalism with its "objectivity" and its special vocabulary. And all this is accompanied, ironically, by a running attack upon science and scientific methods.

It was precisely this scientific pose, conscious or unconscious, that constituted one of the main strengths of the New Criticism. Literary criticism, especially when it deals directly with aesthetic effect, is always open to the charge of vagueness or irresponsibility or lack of rationale or inability to be specific—or of being just plain silly, as it often was in the works of many a weary *fin de siècle poseur*. But here, for the first time, was "art for art" with teeth in it, with a precise method and scientific aplomb. It was as if Oscar Wilde's festering lily had been transformed into a hard, sharp, steel scalpel. In an age of science literary criticism, in a perhaps unconscious desire to acquire protective coloration, borrowed some of the methods and some of the authority of science.

Yet unlike either "art for art" or science, the New Criticism has been determinedly, sometimes lugubriously, moral. Surely no literary criticism, not even Dr. Johnson's, has uttered the word "moral" so many times and, while being so avowedly nondidactic in theory—"the work of art has no message"—has been so didactic in practice. But the mo-

rality was neither external to the work nor derived from a common tradition of the collective historical wisdom of mankind, as was Dr. Johnson's. It was rather a quality of each specific great work of art which, complex and unique as it might be, was yet a moral "touchstone," describing the world and the heart of man in terms of good and evil, telling the reader what was true and what was false, what had value and what did not. To Dr. Johnson, for example, Shakespeare could be and at times was "immoral." For the New Criticism it was an *a priori* assumption that a great writer, or a great piece of literature, is by definition "moral," and moral in a higher and wider sense than conceptualized ethics can ever begin to suggest. On its moralistic side the New Criticism was part of the conservative reaction—anti-bourgeois, antirationalistic, antiprogressive—that has been one of the most distinctive marks of modern culture and of which Eliot is the prime example.

There remains the question of history, and here again, as with the union of aestheticism and science, the New Criticism proves to be, using one of its own favorite words, "paradoxical"—a curious blend of historical and ahistorical allegiances. What strikes one first, of course, is the ahistorical aspect of the New Criticism. The critic, said Eliot in another of his early seminal statements, should see all literature spread out before him in a timeless perspective. There is no history, only a continuum, composed of the great works of literature. The past is not finished or gone; it is being continually modified by the present in this continuum where the past, the present, and the future merge. Man opens doors on the future only to find a mirror in which he sees the same old visage, now more worn: "Stetson! You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!" Moreover, the two chief scientific disciplines which the New Criticism embraced, psychoanalysis and anthropology, both emphasize, individually and in conjunction, the ahistorical or archetypal aspects of human experience. Thus all literature becomes a series of parables, written in differing periods of history, but always concerned with the same basic topography of the human mind and the same basic patterns, myths, rituals of action, and significance.

Yet the New Criticism, if ahistorical in theory, has been obsessed with history in substance, and history itself has been the subject matter of much of the poetry written by the chief poets of the movement. In Allen Tate's words:

> The difference between Pound's "Mauberly" and Arnold's "Obermann" is not merely a difference of diction or of subject; it is the subtle difference between two ways of trying to get out of history what Herbert or Crashaw would have expected

only from God. Both Arnold and Pound are asking history to make them whole—Arnold through philosophy, Pound through art, or esthetic sensibility . . .[3]

The New Critics have also been eminently historical in a conservative sense in their manner of regarding modern history as a series of losses (the "belief" of Dante, the verbal ingenuity of the Elizabethans, etc.) and themselves as the preservers or restorers of these missing heritages.

In short, like most successful historical phenomena the New Criticism was composed of contradictions, and a great part of its success arose precisely out of this many-sidedness, which lent to the whole movement complexity and power. But I believe its ultimate appeal and power has arisen out of an even larger and wider historical anomaly —that it brought together and allied in the same cause the thought and attitude of Bentham and Coleridge.

The analogies of Eliot to Coleridge and Richards to Bentham have long been noted. The first to point them out, to my knowledge, was F. R. Leavis in an adverse review of Richards' *Coleridge on Imagination* in 1935,[4] written before Leavis had his falling-out with Eliot over the "education" of D. H. Lawrence. Eliot emerges in this context as a very positive Coleridge, a poet with a critical intelligence who arrives on the literary scene when critical intelligence is most needed. Richards is taken to task because he is trying to make a science of criticism and because he is reinterpreting Coleridge in Benthamite terms. Some years later, in his introduction to *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge*, Leavis said that Richards' *Principles of Criticism* was a Benthamite book and that Richards was trying to replace Coleridge by Bentham; furthermore, the subtleties of semasiology clothe an essentially Benthamite spirit, and Basic English is emblematic of the practical spirit of Benthamism.[5]

The starting point for any discussion of Bentham and Coleridge is, of course, Mill's essays and his masterly summation of the thought of both men. They were, said Mill, the two great seminal minds of the time and the teachers of the teachers. No thinking man in England had escaped the influence of one or the other, and whosoever could combine the thought of the two could conquer the world, intellectually speaking. It was given to Bentham, said Mill, to discern those truths with which

[3] Allen Tate, "Reflections on American Poetry," *Sewanee Review*, LXIV (Winter 1956), 66-67.

[4] F. R. Leavis, "On Richards, Bentham and Coleridge," *Scrutiny*, III (1935), 382-402. There is a chart in William Elton's *A Glossary of the New Criticism* (Chicago, 1949), p. 2, showing the derivation of most of the New Critics from the twin heritage of Coleridge and Bentham.

[5] F. R. Leavis (ed.), *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge* (London, 1950), pp. 30-31.

existing doctrines and institutions were at variance; to Coleridge, the neglected truths which lay "*in* them."

Bentham's strength and weakness lay in the fact that he never took anything on authority but always asked the question "Why?"; he was therefore the great "subversive" or "critical" philosopher—not a profound philosopher himself but a great reformer in philosophic thought. He was not merely destructive; on the contrary, he was constructive in that he saw always the errors that lurk in generalities and in that he knew generalities were not the realities *per se* but an abridged mode of expressing facts. All discussions on serious matters have a tendency to disappear finally into "phrases"; it was Bentham's historic mission to tear them apart. In Mill's words:

> It is the introduction into the philosophy of human conduct, of this method of detail—of this practice of never reasoning about wholes till they have been resolved into their parts, nor about abstractions till they have been translated into realities . . .[6]

But Bentham had the defects of his virtues. He had only contempt for the philosophers of the past and thus failed to derive light from other minds.

Richards' relationship to Bentham is direct and admitted; in contrast, his preoccupation with Coleridge's theory of imagination is a minor concern. In the *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1928) the chapter entitled "A Psychological Theory of Value" is pure Benthamism in its combined distrust of abstractions and its reliance on the concept that the satisfaction of appetencies—pleasure and pain—constitutes the ultimate value of things: "value lies in the 'minute particulars' of response and attitude . . ."[7] Moreover, Bentham himself was basically a semanticist. David Baumgardt points out that Bentham objected to "The Declaration of the Rights of Man" not on moral or political but on semantic grounds; the Declaration confused the "is" with the "ought," and in an empirical ethics or politics there can be no reference from "is" to "ought"; there can only be reference from one "is" to another "is."[8] And Bentham's chief aim was "to bring to light the hidden use of tautologies in moral reasoning."[9]

Bentham thought that language was inherently ambiguous, and nowhere more so than in poetic and figurative discourse. When he felt

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[7] I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York, 1950), p. 61.
[8] David Baumgardt, *Bentham and the Ethics of Today* (Princeton, 1952), p. 406.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

himself falling into the trap of poetry, as even he occasionally did, he pulled himself up short: "But enough of metaphor and declamation: it is not by such means that moral science is to be improved."[10] For him it was difficult to describe anything at any level of linguistic usage because of "a certain perversity of structure which prevails more or less throughout all languages."[11] He himself hoped, looking forward to Basic English, "to lay aside the old phraseology and invent a new one. Happy the man whose language is ductile enough to permit him this resource."[12]

The New Criticism, largely through Richards, was Benthamite in five important respects: first, it thought of itself as "scientific," "objective," and "concrete" in contrast to the "vagueness," "impressionism," and "abstractness" of its predecessors; second, like Bentham, it had a tendency to dismiss these predecessors as useless and to think of itself as the first literary criticism to "read" poetry; third, its methodology was systematic and exhaustive, working from part to whole rather than vice versa; fourth, it assumed that the value that inheres in poetry is not the "beautiful," in the conventional sense, nor the "sugar-coated message," but rather arises out of the fact that a linguistic structure can alter and satisfy certain emotional "appetencies," affording pleasure and minimizing pain; fifth, it accepted the two Benthamite assumptions about language: that abstractions are meaningless verbiage and that all language is inherently ambiguous—only, unlike Bentham, it made this quality the supreme glory rather than the inherent defect of language, turning Bentham upside down.

The influence of Coleridge on the New Criticism is both more indirect and more obvious than that of Bentham. Eliot, by example, and Richards, by theory, have been the chief transmitters. Eliot, as Leavis said, actually played the role of a modern Coleridge—the poet-critic. Moreover, the whole cast of his mind is similar to that of Coleridge, and, like Coleridge, he seems to be still fighting the battle against eighteenth-century rationalism. As Mill summarizes:

> It [Coleridge's thought] is ontological, because that [the philosophy of the eighteenth century] was experimental; conservative, because that was innovative; religious, because so much of that was infidel; concrete and historical, because that was abstract and metaphysical; poetical, because that was matter-of-fact and prosaic.[13]

[10] Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford, 1907), p. 2.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 103.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.
[13] Leavis, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

The name "Eliot" could be inserted without causing any discrepancies in the description.

Coleridge's contributions to the New Criticism have been threefold. First, as Eliot remarked, he demonstrated that the province of literary criticism was infinite and that almost no field of knowledge, except the natural sciences, was irrelevant to its purposes, and Arnold had furthered this notion by his idea that the function of criticism was ever to provide a stream of new and fresh ideas. Second, Coleridge was concerned—and here Richards is the direct transmitter—with the outline and the workings of the poetic imagination or, in modern terms, the "psychology of the artist." The Victorians had ignored this problem, as had the Edwardians. But the New Criticism took up Coleridge's preoccupation again, and produced the curious anomaly of noncreative writers of criticism discoursing, often with great "authority," on the vision of the "artist" and the workings of the "artist's" mind. For along with "paradox" and "moral," the word "artist," and an assumed "artistic" perspective, have the highest incidence in the vocabulary of the New Criticism. Third, and most important, Coleridge's influence and legacy consist in a preoccupation with "meaning." If Bentham asked of all received opinions, "Is it true?," Coleridge asked, "What is the meaning of it?" Thus the New Criticism was not concerned with truth but with meaning. Its basic attitudes toward works of literature were analogous to Coleridge's assumptions about all human institutions; they are not treated judicially, as Dr. Johnson in striking a balance between the virtues and defects of Shakespeare, but as a kind of *logos* or revelation, a vessel of wisdom sailing down out of the past, something that it is idle to question or even to find fault with, a kind of impersonal statement above and beyond its specific author, an emanation from the deepest levels of the collective unconscious and thus shaped by the primordial human imagination. And it is therefore no accident that the group of Southern poet-critics who, after Richards and Eliot, have been the most influential, as well as the most brilliant practitioners in the New Criticism, were generally conservative in their political outlook as well.

Mill had said that nobody could escape being either a Benthamite or a Coleridgean; given the construction of the human mind there was no escape. But the New Criticism managed to have it both ways, so to speak, and to equip the basically antiscientific attitude of Coleridge with the scientific precision of Bentham.

University of California

JOHN LOFTIS

Spanish Drama in Neoclassical England

THE AUTHOR of a prologue spoken at Drury Lane in 1717 described epigrammatically his contemporary playwrights' borrowings from the two major national dramas of the continent: "Theirs are the Rules of France, the Plots of Spain / . . . / They pall Moliere's and Lopez sprightly strain, / And teach dull Harlequins to grin in vain."[1] "The Rules of France, the Plots of Spain"—the dramatists admired and imitated the neoclassical regularity of French drama and adapted the plots of Spanish drama to their own English uses.

The extent of English exploitation of French drama has long been known, but the borrowing from Spanish drama has been underestimated. The number of Spanish plays is all but astronomical, so large that an English dramatist who preferred not to admit his borrowing was in little danger of detection by his contemporaries—and is in only a little more danger today after two centuries of scholarly investigation.

Some of the English adaptations came from the Spanish by way of French adaptations; and some apparently came by way of literal translations of the originals supplied to English dramatists who knew no Spanish. But, whatever the route taken in their passage to England, many Spanish plays appeared on the English stage during the Restoration and the eighteenth century.

As a generalization, Englishmen of the Restoration and eighteenth century did not know Spanish so well as French; and English men of letters may not have known it so well as Italian; but many of them did know Spanish. Spain was still a great power and the nation, its lan-

[1] Prologue to John Gay, Alexander Pope, and Dr. John Arbuthnot, *Three Hours After Marriage* (London, 1717).

guage, and its culture were closer to the English center of consciousness than today. In the early eighteenth century there seems to have been some intensification of interest in things Spanish, occasioned by the War of the Spanish Succession, in which the English carried on a Peninsular campaign, and by trade relations with Spain's neighbor Portugal, an ally of England in the war. Many Englishmen went to Spain and Portugal, and some of them learned the languages.

If it is difficult to say with any precision how widely and how well Spanish was known in England, it can at least be said with assurance that many men of letters had a knowledge of Spanish literature. Nearly everyone who read anything knew *Don Quixote* in some version—in the original, in a translation, in the three-part dramatic adaptation of D'Urfey, or, later, in the naturalized dramatic adaptation of Fielding. The number of allusions to *Don Quixote* in the English literature of this period is prodigious. Many also knew Cervantes' *Exemplary Novels* and the novels of other Spaniards; and many admired Guevara and Gracián. And many more knew the Spanish dramatists. Among the English writers who took material for plays, either directly or indirectly, from the Spanish dramatists were John Dryden, George Digby Earl of Bristol, Sir Samuel Tuke, William Wycherley, John Crowne, Sir John Vanburgh, Richard Steele, Susannah Centlivre, Christopher Bullock, Richard Savage, and Robert Dodsley. This list could easily be doubled.

A satirical exchange in George Farquhar's *The Twin Rivals* (1702; III, i) suggests what was apparently the common attitude toward Spanish drama as a reservoir of plots. Mr. Comic has come to the levee of a usurping lord, Benjamin Wouldbe, to request patronage:

> Mr. Comic: ... I have another Play just finish'd, but that I want a Plot for't.
> Benjamin Wouldbe: A Plot! you shou'd read the *Italian* and *Spanish* Plays, Mr. *Comick*—I like your Verses here mightily.

A couplet in the prologue to Mary Davys' *The Northern Heiress* (1716) conveys a similar impression:

> Besides, she [the author] wants those Helps that some have got,
> Who take from French or Spanish Plays their Plot ...

John Leanerd's *The Counterfeits* (1678) and Colley Cibber's *She Would and She Would Not* (1702) illustrate admirably the use of Spanish plots by English dramatists, the failure of scholars to recognize these adaptations, and their inclination to look for English sources even where Spanish characters and a Spanish locale would seem to suggest a Spanish origin.

William M. Peterson, in the opening sentence of the most recent study of Cibber's play, remarks:

> *She wou'd, and She wou'd not*, one of Colley Cibber's most successful and least sentimental comedies, is derived directly from *The Counterfeits* (1678), attributed to John Leanerd, and indirectly from "The Trepanner Trepann'd," a story in *La Picara, or the Triumphs of Female Subtilty* (1665) by John Davies of Kidwelly.[2]

Peterson cites "Giles Jacob, *The Poetical Register* (London: E. Curll, 1719), p. 307." Gerard Langbaine apparently originated the view, expressed by Jacob, that *The Counterfeits* is based on "The Trepanner Trepanned,"[3] a view later accepted by several scholars, including D. E. Baker, John Genest, Joseph Knight in the article on Cibber in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and DeWitt C. Croissant. Baker and Knight mention *The Counterfeits* as the source of *She Would*; Richard Hindry Barker mentions it as a possibility, though he states that *She Would* may be taken from an unidentified Spanish source. Croissant alone of later scholars adds substantially to the customary interpretation of the relationship between the story and the plays—he suggests that the plays are independent adaptations of the story, and cites as analogues to both the plays and the story Tirso de Molina's *La villana de Vallecas* and Moreto y Cabaña's *La ocasión hace al ladrón*.[4] Croissant's views are helpful—he provides suggestions needed to account for the relationships between the several plays; but in essentials he is in error.

Neither *The Counterfeits* nor *She Would and She Would Not* is based on "The Trepanner Trepanned." Rather, *The Counterfeits* is a close adaptation of Moreto y Cabaña's *La ocasión hace al ladrón*, itself an adaptation of Tirso de Molina's *La villana de Vallecas*[5]; and *She Would* is a free adaptation of Tirso's *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*. The similarities in plot between all of these plays and "The Trepanner

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[2] "Cibber's *She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not* and Vanbrugh's *Aesop*," *Philological Quarterly*, XXXV (1956), 429.

[3] Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (Oxford, 1691), p. 528. Langbaine states that the play is " founded" on the story and adds that some details of the play are apparently derived from Thomas Corneille's *Dom César d'Avalos*. The similarities he noticed between *The Counterfeits* and *Dom César* are to be accounted for by the fact that the French play is in part based upon Tirso's *La villana de Vallecas*, the ultimate source of *The Counterfeits*. For a discussion of Corneille's sources, see Henry Carrington Lancaster, *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century*, Part IV (Baltimore, 1940), I, 447-48.

[4] DeWitt C. Croissant, *Studies in the Work of Colley Cibber* (Lawrence, Kan., 1912), p. 19.

[5] Adolf Schaeffer, *Geschichte des Spanischen Nationaldramas* (Leipzig, 1890), II, 172-173.

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Trepanned" are presumably to be accounted for by the circumstance that Don Alonso de Castillo Solórzano, the author of the original from which "The Trepanner Trepanned" is translated (by way of a French intermediary),[6] used for his plot a Spanish story quite like those which Tirso used in *La villana de Vallecas* and in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*. But the similarities between the Spanish and English plays are far more particularized and hence more suggestive of direct relationship than those between the English plays and the prose translation of Castillo Solórzano by John Davies.

The plot of "The Trepanner Trepanned," like that of the two Spanish and the two English plays, is about a young woman's pursuit of a man who has deserted her. In the story the young woman gives herself to the man only upon receipt of a written promise of marriage, which he signs with an assumed name. He soon leaves her to go to Madrid, where he plans to marry another young woman. The wronged woman learns his true identity and his plans from a letter which he has inadvertently left behind. She too goes to Madrid and, under an assumed name, secures employment in the household of her rival—and soon executes a stratagem by which she forces the man to comply with his promise to marry her.

Although resembling this story in general plan, *The Counterfeits* has far more resemblances in detail to *La ocasión hace al ladrón*. In both plays a young woman has been seduced by a man employing an assumed name who has subsequently deserted her, and in both a brother of the young woman learns of her dishonor and determines to avenge her. However, the sister, unknown to her brother, decides to manage her own affairs. Accompanied by a maidservant, she goes to Madrid in pursuit of her seducer. (The dramatic action of *The Counterfeits* begins in Madrid; that of *La ocasión* in Valencia, where the young woman resides.)

In an inn the young woman meets a stranger, a young man just arrived in Spain from Mexico, whose true name is identical with that which her seducer had used. This young man has come to Spain to marry the daughter of an old friend of his father's. However, he has lost his letters of accreditation to his betrothed through an inadvertent exchange of portmanteaus with a stranger whom he met in an inn —a stranger who is in fact the seducer of the young woman. The seducer meanwhile meets by accident the betrothed of the young man from Mexico and falls in love with her. When he discovers in the portmanteau in his possession letters of accreditation to her father,

[6] *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, II, 69.

he presents himself at her home in the guise of the other man and is favorably received. The true young man subsequently appears but is received with suspicion. In both plays the true young man is put in jail, but later released by the impostor's uncle, who mistakes him for his nephew. All are finally brought together and the deceits revealed; the impostor marries the woman he has wronged, moved by fear of her brother, and the young man from Mexico marries his betrothed.

If nothing else, the proper names which the two comedies have in common (not always for the parallel characters) provide sufficient evidence of a link between them: Gomez, Luis, Violante, and Crispin appear in both plays; Peralta is the father of the true young man's betrothed in Moreto and of the impostor in Leanerd; the Marquis of Velada is, in both versions, an addressee of a letter in the impostor's portmanteau. The main differences result from the English author's presentation of much of the early action by way of retrospective conversation—presumably so that he could observe the unities of time and place.

The relationship of Cibber's *She Would and She Would Not* and Tirso's *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* is not so close as that between the plays just examined. Some other play—Spanish, French, or English—may intervene between *Don Gil* and *She Would*, perhaps in the manner in which *La ocasión hace al ladrón* intervenes between *La villana de Vallecas* and *The Counterfeits*. And certain passages in *She Would* are clearly borrowings from John Fletcher and Sir John Vanbrugh.[7] But the similarities are far too considerable to be merely accidental. Again, Cibber's play is much closer to Tirso than it is to "The Trepanner Trepanned" or *The Counterfeits*.

The parallels are restricted to the first half of the plays, but here they are striking. In both *She Would* and *Don Gil* a vivacious and resourceful young woman, disguised as a man, comes to Madrid with an old servant (of different sex in the two plays) in pursuit of a former suitor who has left her to court another young woman with whose father his own father has entered into negotiations. Upon arriving in Madrid, the young woman engages a new and garrulous servant, who talks freely of his previous experience in service. The young woman gains possession of the papers of accreditation and also some money of the man she is pursuing. Still disguised as a man, she convinces the father of the other young woman, by means of the papers, that she (he) is the intended husband about whom the father has been in correspond-

[7] Richard Hindry Barker, *Mr. Cibber of Drury Lane* (New York, 1939), pp. 45-46; Peterson, *op. cit.*

ence. She also gains the cooperation of the other young woman. When the stratagem succeeds, the young man in each play is treated by the father as an impostor. The intrigues are worked out differently in the latter half of the two plays.

The Counterfeits and *She Would and She Would Not*, the one little more than a translation of Moreto's play and the other a free adaptation of Tirso's, are typical of the fate of Spanish plays in Restoration and eighteenth-century England. Both English plays have a simpler and more orderly sequence of action than the Spanish models; both plays conform to neoclassical principles whereas the models do not. Yet the English plays are vastly inferior to the Spanish. In each case a Spanish comedy in verse, exhibiting thematic complexity and a high linguistic virtuosity, has been refashioned as a prose comedy of intrigue, dependent for its effectiveness on the suspense provided by the gradual resolution of dramatic conflict. Tirso, who is ultimately responsible for both *Don Gil* and *La ocasión*, is frequently careless in details of dramatic structure; but he reveals a compensating brilliance in elaborating the texture of his plays—in modulations of metrical patterns, in ingenuity of repartee, and in psychological subtlety of characterization. The English adaptations by Leanerd and Cibber are flat and factual renderings of dramatic action in which the poetry of the original is lost.

Stanford University

MARLIES K. DANZIGER

Heroic Villains in Eighteenth-Century Criticism

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY critics, known for their firm conviction that literature should extol virtue and make vice repellent, might be expected to take a highly unfavorable view of characters conspicuous for their villainy. Yet a number of critics in England and on the continent acknowledged that certain villain-heroes might give an audience considerable pleasure. Indeed, a particular explanation for such pleasure was evolved and came to be rather widely accepted in the course of the century.

Aristotle had tacitly approved of villainous characters when they are introduced in secondary roles. Although he considered wholly wicked figures unsuitable as tragic heroes, he found them objectionable as minor characters only if, like Euripides' Menelaus, they are more wicked than the plot demands.[1] It has been argued that he would certainly have accepted their use to bring about the catastrophe, and also to serve as contrast to the virtuous characters.[2]

During the second part of the seventeenth century, several different arguments for approving of villainous characters were developed almost concurrently. Rapin finds them acceptable on rather simple moral grounds. When heroic poetry shows great virtues and great vices, he points out in his *Réflexions sur la poétique d'Aristote* (1674), we learn to love the former and to detest the latter. We admire the piety of an

[1] *Poetics*, XIII, 2; XXV, 19. All references are to the text in S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (London, 1898).

[2] J. W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1934), I, 111; cf. Butcher, pp. 307-310.

Aeneas and abhor the profaneness of a Mizentius.[3] In contrast to Rapin, Le Bossu approves of the villain-hero on literary grounds. In his *Traité du poème épique* (1675), drawing on the idea found in Aristotle and Horace that characters are successful if they are consistent and conform with the principles of decorum,[4] Le Bossu argues that characters need not be morally good in order to be poetically good. He finds Achilles and Mizentius no less good, poetically, than Ulysses and Aeneas. With appropriate references to both reason and the ancients, he summarizes his position:

> ...Nous pouvons conclure, que la raison & la nature du Poëme, la pratique d'Homère, & les préceptes d'Aristote & d'Horace nous enseignent qu'il n'est pas nécessaire que le Héros d'un Poëme soit homme de bien & vertueux: & qu'il n'y a aucune irregularité à le faire aussi perfide qu'Ixion, aussi dénaturé que Médée, & aussi brutal qu'Achille.[5]

He goes on to insist, however, that vice should be carried only as far as is necessary to keep the action moving. It should not be exploited for its own sake, nor is it to be considered of equal value with virtue.[6] Dryden's position is similar to Le Bossu's, though less favorable to the villain. In his "Dedication of the Aeneis" (1697), he notes that wicked characters are "poetically good if they are of a piece," but immediately adds, "though where a character of perfect virtue is set before us, it is more lovely . . . "[7] These writers tend, on the whole, to regard the villain as a useful secondary figure, whose presence in drama could be defended by appeal to the ancients. But they hardly greet him with enthusiasm.

Another, more positive evaluation of the villain that became current in the seventeenth century is presented by Corneille in the first of his discourses on drama, "Discours de l'utilité et des parties du poème dramatique" (1660). He notes the discrepancy between Aristotle's desire for "good" manners (*Poetics*, XV) and the numerous crimes depicted in ancient tragedies. Trying to reconcile theory with practice, Corneille has recourse to the Horatian dictum on consistency of character, but also to something more. He argues that Aristotle favors characters who are distinguished by extraordinary virtues or, alternatively, by extraordinary vices; that it is enough for them to be "brillant et élevé d'une habitude vertueuse ou criminelle, selon qu'elle est propre et convenable

[3] Par. X, cited from *Œuvres* (The Hague, 1725).

[4] See *Poetics*, XV, 1-5; *The Art of Poetry*, lines 112 ff., 153 ff. All references are to the text in *The Art of Poetry: The Poetical Treatises of Horace, Vida, and Boileau*, ed. Albert S. Cook (Boston, 1892).

[5] *Traité du poème épique* (Paris, 1693), IV, v.

[6] *Ibid.*, IV, vi.

[7] *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford, 1926), II, 159.

à la personne qu'on introduit."[8] What is noteworthy in this passage is the emphasis on elevation, on what Corneille goes on to call "greatness of soul." He observes that the Cleopatra of his *Rodogune* is thoroughly wicked; she is so ambitious that she does not shrink from murdering her husband and one of her sons in order to retain her power. Nevertheless, Corneille points out in an obvious attempt to justify his choice of heroine, there is something admirable in her very strength of mind: "tous ses crimes sont accompagnés d'une grandeur d'âme qui a quelque chose de si haut, qu'en même temps qu'on déteste ses actions, on admire la source dont elles partent."[9] Boileau expresses more concisely this admiration for greatness in "L'Art poétique" (1674). Characters are to be heroic even in their faults:

> Qu'il soit tel que César, Alexandre, ou Louis;
> Non tel que Polynice et son perfide frère:
> On s'ennuie aux exploits d'un conquérant vulgaire.[10]

It is noteworthy that neither Corneille nor Boileau really tries to justify the villainy of the characters they have in mind. What they admire is the strength which gives rise to or accompanies the villainy—the heroic stature of the villains.

It is precisely this idea that a villainous character is pleasing if he has extraordinary stature that became crucial in the eighteenth-century discussions of the type. It did so because it could be readily combined with a related subject which was occupying the critics—the sublime. Indeed, it was in discussions of the sublime, more often than in discussions of tragedy or the epic, that the problem of the heroic villain was brought up in the course of the century.

Such discussions were not confined to any one country and continued through the century. Samuel Werenfels, professor at Basel, in his *Dissertation concerning Meteors of Style, or False Sublimity*, published in Latin in 1702, and in an English translation in 1711,[11] seems to have been the first of the period to suggest that great cruelty and great villiany can arouse admiration and are therefore eminently suitable subjects for a grand or sublime style. Fontenelle comments on the dramatic possibili-

[8] *Œuvres*, ed. Marty-Laveaux (Paris, 1862), I, 31-32. Corneille seems to be turning to his own use the passage in *Poetics*, XV, 8, in which Aristotle notes that "the poet, in representing men who are irascible or indolent, or have other defects of character, should preserve the type and yet ennoble it." Aristotle is concerned with the creation of "a likeness which is true to life and yet more beautiful," and not specifically with the ennobling of villains.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Œuvres Complètes* (Paris, 1904), Chant. III, lines 250-253; I, 207.

[11] Added to *A Discourse of Logomachys, or Controversys about Words* (London, 1711), p. 189.

ties of villains in his *Réflexions sur la poétique* (not published until 1742 but presumably written earlier), and adds the provisio of Boileau that such villains should not be mean or ordinary:

> Un demi tiran seroit indigne d'être regardé; mais l'ambition, la cruauté, la perfidie, poussées à leur plus haut point deviennent de grands objets... L'ambition est noble, quand elle ne se propose que des Trônes; la cruauté l'est en quelque sorte, quand elle est soutenue d'une grande fermeté d'âme; la perfidie l'est aussi, quand elle est accompagnée d'une extrême habileté.[12]

Though he does not use the term *sublime*, Fontelle's *grand* is a common equivalent and certainly has the same connotations in the passage just quoted. Diderot writes about great or sublime actions and great crimes in his *Salon de 1765*. In a manner reminiscent of both Boileau and Fontenelle, he maintains: "Je hais toutes ces petites bassesses, qui ne montrent qu'une âme abjecte; mais je ne hais pas les grands crimes..."[13] The anonymous author of *An Essay upon the Present State of the Theatre in France, England and Italy* (London, 1760) repeats almost verbatim Fontenelle's statements about the unworthiness of demi-tyrants and the nobility of certain kinds of ambition, cruelty, and treachery, and explicitly relates villainous deeds to the sublime. Using Richard III, Macbeth, and Iago as examples, he observes: "Their execrable and horrid crimes contract something sublime and elevating, and all the exaggerations of their guilt contribute to raise them to a character of heroism."[14] Other English critics—notably John Baillie, Lord Kames, Hugh Blair, James Beattie, and Richard Payne Knight[15]—also explain the appeal of great villains as an experience of the sublime.

The classical authority which could be cited for relating heroic villains to the sublime was not the usual one for matters pertaining to the sublime. Longinus does mention greatness of soul as an essential for one who wishes to excel in the sublime style (*On the Sublime*, IX), but he is clearly referring to the greatness of soul that comes from supreme virtue. He, too, prefers "a lofty and towering genius," guilty though he may be of transgressing against the rules, to the "low and grovelling

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[12] *Œuvres* (Paris, 1742), III, 141.

[13] *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. J. Assezat (Paris, 1876), X, 342.

[14] Page 19.

[15] Baillie, *An Essay on the Sublime* (London, 1747), pp. 25-27; Kames, *Elements of Criticism* (1762), 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1765), I, 234-235; Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1782), 5th ed. (London, 1793), I, 68; Beattie, "Illustrations on Sublimity," *Dissertations Moral and Critical* (1783), in *Works* (Philadelphia, 1809), III, 178 ff.; Knight, *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1805), (London, 1808), III, i.

genius" who remains correct because he takes no chances (XXXIII).[16] But Longinus is thinking only of the literary man and of errors in writing. He suggests an admiration for the great but irregular genius,[17] not for the villain. Before Longinus, however, and possibly influencing him, Plato had made some general comments on greatness which are of significance. In the section of *The Republic* in which he describes what may happen to the great man if he goes astray without the guidance of philosophy, Plato opposes greatness—whether in virtue or in wickedness—to mere mediocrity. Although he notes with regret that great natures may be more susceptible to evil than small ones,[18] in one passage at least he also argues that the great natures who have gone astray may become capable of greater good than the small. He writes of certain "natures which we maintain to be rare at any time; this being the class out of which come the men who are the authors of the greatest evil to States and individuals; and also of the greatest good when the tide carries them in that direction." And he adds: "but a small man never was the doer of any great thing either to individuals or to States."[19] In suggesting that evildoers are, in at least one respect, more akin to the virtuous than to the mediocre, Plato points the way to a more positive evaluation of heroic villainy.

The eighteenth-century critics were, of course, quite aware of the moral implications of admiring heroic villains. At least two lines of argument were advanced to reconcile the notion that such characters are pleasing with the conventional didactic theory of literature. One group of critics took a position which might be called the anti-Longinian, arguing that the sublime has nothing to do with the moral, and that a villain, in so far as he is sublime, constitutes a special case beyond good and evil. John Baillie develops this position most clearly in his *Essay on the Sublime* (1747). Whereas Longinus suggested that the rejection of wealth, honors, and power is closer to the sublime than the desire for these (*On the Sublime*, VII), Baillie, in deliberate opposition, argues that the desire for wealth, honors, and power can be sublime even when it is far from virtuous: "The Passion of Caesar to Conquest and Empire, is no less sublime, than the Stoic Apathy of the Philosopher (if such there ever was, or ever shall be) who should reject them; tho' we might allow in the latter a more virtuous and

[16] The phrases quoted are taken from the popular eighteenth-century translation by William Smith (1739), 4th ed. (London, 1770).

[17] See S. H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England* (New York, 1935), pp. 12-14.

[18] *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. B. Jowett (New York, 1937), VI, 491.

[19] *Ibid.*, VI, 495.

laudable affection."[20] The allusion to Caesar reinforces his point; for Caesar, through the interpretation of Lucan, had become a prototype of the heroic villain.[21]

The sharp distinction between the sublime and the moral was also developed, earlier in the century, by Werenfels. Possibly influenced by Machiavelli, he notes that villainy or cruelty inspires anger, fear, sorrow, and despair, and that these emotions serve to magnify the object which has caused them. Virtue, on the other hand, inspires love, but this tends to be related to contempt, and the object which produces the emotions can easily become reduced or minimized in the eyes of the observer. Not only does Werenfels find the two emotional experiences different, but he makes it plain that the emotions inspired by villainy or cruelty, being stronger than those inspired by virtue, are a surer sign of the sublime.[22] Fontenelle, too, seems to oppose the great or sublime to the good. In a pithy maxim, he writes: "Le Théâtre n'est pas ennemi de ce qui est vicieux, mais de ce qui est bas & petit."[23]

The anti-Longinian notion that evil is compatible with the sublime called forth numerous protests during the century. Alexander Baumgarten refers in his lectures of 1750-51 to the passage by Werenfels quoted above, mainly to criticize it. Baumgarten maintains that evil is always mean or base, and that it can be considered great only insofar as it stimulates reflections about corresponding virtues.[24] Louis Sebastien Mercier, in his *Du Théâtre* (1773), gives an eloquent description of the sublime villain, supposed by some to be as striking and stirring as thunder or a giant conflagration, but then undercuts his description by asking, "But what is the use?" and insists that less villainous or more virtuous characters are to be preferred.[25] Alexander Gerard, in his *Essay on Taste* (1759), III, vi, notes that "some vices appear sublime and elegant," but insists that to admire these reveals an inferior taste in the reader or spectator. Perhaps Dr. Johnson is also voicing his opposition to identifying the immoral with the sublime when he observes in *The Rambler*, No. 4 (1750) that "There have been men in-

[20] Pp. 25-26.

[21] See William Blisset, "Lucan's Caesar and the Elizabethan Villain," *SP*, LIII (1956), 553-575.

[22] "A Dissertation concerning Meteors of Stile," *A Discourse of Logomachys*, p. 189. Cf. *The Prince*, XVII.

[23] *Loc. cit.*

[24] "Kollegium über Ästhetik," ed. Bernhard Poppe, in *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten: Seine Bedeutung und Stellung in der Leibniz-Wolffischen Philosophie . . . Nebst Veröffentlichung einer bisher unbekannten Handschrift der Ästhetik Baumgartens* (Leipzig, 1907), par. 203.

[25] Pp. 33-34.

deed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes," but adds firmly, "such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain."

A second group of critics in the eighteenth century found it possible to consider the heroic villain sublime without condoning his wicked deeds. Taking a position similar to Corneille's and Boileau's, they tended to argue that extraordinary villainy may be accompanied by extraordinary daring, courage, or strength of mind, admirable traits of which they approved. Hugh Blair takes this position in his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1782). Although he finds "high virtue" one of the chief sources of the sublime, he observes that on occasion immoral characters are highly pleasing. "If extraordinary vigour and force of mind be discovered, we are not insensible to a degree of grandeur in the character; and from the splendid conqueror, or the daring conspirator, whom we are far from approving, we cannot with-hold our admiration."[26]

Diderot, who is much more enthusiastic about great crimes than Blair, nevertheless ends his discussion in the *Salon de 1765* with the moralistic reflection that, if the world can produce a Caesar, it can also produce a Cato.[27] Johann Georg Sulzer, author of the encyclopaedic *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften* (1771-74), comes closer to expressing Plato's idea that great villainy may be more akin to great virtue than mere mediocrity. In his article on the sublime ("Erhaben"), he suggests that a highly gifted villain may change and eventually perform deeds of extraordinary virtue, whereas the ordinary man, without the strength of mind and sensibility of such a villain, is likely to remain a moral nonentity. In the case of Diderot and Sulzer, the apparent approval of wickedness depends ultimately on their approval of a higher, heroic morality.

To explain more fully why heroic villains may be pleasing, the eighteenth-century critics turned to various psychological theories which were currently being applied to the literary experience. All of these critics subscribed, at least in part, to the popular theory that emotional activity or "agitation" is intrinsically pleasing as long as it is not too strenuous or painful. This theory can be traced to Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, and Leibniz, as well as to a host of writers interested specifically in the literary experience, notably Addison and Du Bos.[28]

[26] I, 68.

[27] *Œuvres*, X, 342.

[28] See Descartes, *Les Passions de l'âme* (1649), xciv, cxlvii; Hobbes, *Levi-*

Fontenelle, for example, begins his *Réflexions sur la poétique* with the axiom that man delights in a state of activity; then calls for literary works possessing "great interest," presumably in order to assure the pleasing activity; and thereupon introduces the idea that the representation of great villainy can be as pleasing as that of great virtue (v-x, xvii). Werenfels obviously considers the strong emotions of anger, fear, sorrow, and despair more effective than the milder emotion of love. James Beattie, who gives a number of psychological explanations for the appeal of heroic villains, suggests that a painful experience of the imagination can be as pleasurable as certain fatiguing or even dangerous physical exercises. "Those things give delight, which rouse the soul, even when they bring along with them horrour, anxiety, or sorrow, provided these passions be transient, and their causes rather imaginary than real."[29]

Beattie's last phrase suggests a second explanation which could be combined with the theory of pleasing activity—the assumption that the reader or spectator always remains aware to some extent of the fact that he is watching an artistic representation, an "imitation." Beattie points out, for example, that Milton's Satan is considered powerful and admirable because he is known to be imaginary. "As we admire him for sublimity of character, we consider him, not as the great enemy of our souls, but as a fictitious being, and a mere poetical hero."[30] Beattie is using the typical eighteenth-century explanation for the appeal of any intrinsically unpleasant or ugly subject matter. Addison, earlier in the century, suggested that even a dunghill could become effective through a skillful description.[31] Alexander Gerard and Lord Kames both apply this explanation to villainous characters, though not when they consider these under the heading of the sublime.[32] Thus the

athan (1651), I, iv, viii; Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), II, xx, 3; Leibniz, "Von der Glückseligkeit" (ca. 1710); Addison, *Spectator*, No. 411 ff.; Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719), I, i-v. See Earl R. Wasserman, "The Pleasures of Tragedy," *ELH*, XIV (1947), 288-290.

[29] *Op. cit.*, III, 186.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

[31] *Spectator*, No. 418.

[32] Gerard, *An Essay on Taste*, I, vi, in a passage on imitation, writes that "A perfect imitation of characters morally evil, can make us dwell with pleasure on them notwithstanding the uneasy sentiments of disapprobation and abhorrence they excite. The character of Iago is detestable, but we admire Shakespeare's representation of it." Kames also acknowledges the power of the artistic representation (*Elements of Criticism*, II, 358), but he finds it hard to approve of Iago: "The character of Iago is insufferably monstrous and satanical: not even Shakespeare's masterly hand can make the picture agreeable" (II, 361-363).

artistic representation could become a mitigating factor, making palatable a subject which might otherwise be painful.

Yet another explanation was evolved by several critics and became more prominent in the course of the century. It is the idea that the villainous hero, if he is indeed sublime, can evoke a simple response of admiration. Lord Kames touches on this notion briefly when writing about the sublime. He is applying his favorite theory that the greatest pleasure comes from a complete identification with the action of a story or a play, from a "revery" or "waking dream," in which everything seems to be passing before one's very eyes. He suggests that it is possible to identify oneself so fully with a villainous conqueror that one scarcely notices his ruthlessness. "The splendour and enthusiasm of the hero transfused into the readers, elevate their minds far above the rules of justice, and render them in a great measure insensible to the wrongs that are committed."[33] Kames' statement is, however, made in passing, and he gives no examples of the heroes he has in mind.

The idea that the "splendour and enthusiasm" of the villain can give rise to correspondingly strong emotions in the reader, touched on lightly by Kames, was given greater prominence by other critics. Extending the theory that activity is a major source of pleasure, these critics suggested that the very sight of activity in others is pleasing. In the background, presumably, is the Horatian idea that he who wishes the audience to weep, must weep himself; he who wishes to inspire strong emotions in others must be in the grip of equally strong emotions.[34] Diderot explains that the factor which makes great crimes pleasing is the energy they reveal. Indeed, energy is his key term: " . . . je ne hais pas les grands crimes: premièrement, parce qu'on en fait de beaux tableaux et de belles tragédies; et puis, c'est que les grandes et sublimes actions et les grands crimes portent le même caractère d'énergie."[35] Johann Georg Sulzer echoes Diderot's admiration for such energy, for any active force of extraordinary greatness. "Jede würkende Kraft von außerordentlicher Größe hat etwas Bewundrungswürdiges," he writes in the article "Erhaben" of the *Allgemeine Theorie*. It is such energy or power which makes even the irreverence of Sophocles' Ajax and Milton's Satan stirring and sublime.

A still clearer and fuller account of the interrelationship among

[33] *Ibid.*, I, 234-235.

[34] *The Art of Poetry*, 1, 100 ff.

[35] *Op. cit.*, p. 342. Herbert Dieckman, "Diderot's Conception of Genius," *JHI*, II (1941), 181, draws attention to this passage and finds it consistent with Diderot's admiration for men of genius and energy; he does not, however, mention the fact that Diderot is drawing on a long-standing tradition.

energy, evil, and the sublime is given by Richard Payne Knight in his *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1805). Although he is writing in the early nineteenth century, his ideas are still so much in the tradition of the eighteenth that they may be cited here. Knight observes that hatred or malice may become sublime subjects, and uses Shylock as his main example. He explains:

> ... not that malignity is a sublime passion; but that in strong and powerful minds, such as that of Shylock is feigned to be, it is an energetic one; and, consequently, well adapted to excite sentiments and expressions of great and enthusiastic force and vigour; with which we sympathize, and not with the passion itself, which could only excite odious and disgusting feelings; such as every person would be disposed to shun, rather than to seek.[36]

Knight is summarizing several of the ideas current during the eighteenth century: that not the vice but the strengths which accompany it are sublime; that such strengths are best subsumed under the single heading of energy; and that such energy arouses a sympathetic and pleasing response in the reader or spectator.

It is noteworthy that the heroic villains mentioned by the critics under discussion are, on the whole, relatively few in number. They include certain historical figures—Caesar or, more often, a series of unidentified conquerors and conspirators; a few heroes from ancient tragedies or epics; the obvious Shakespearean villains; and Milton's Satan. In short, most of the eighteenth-century critics are seeking to account for the appeal of older works, the classics of their time. But, interestingly enough, the same arguments and explanations could also be used to justify the new drama written in Germany in the spirit of the Storm and Stress. Schiller uses them for precisely this purpose in his prefaces to *Die Räuber* (1781), which has two characters who, each in his own way, qualify as traditional heroic villains.

Franz Moor is a ruthless, calculating scoundrel, a literary cousin to Edmund of *King Lear*. He is guilty of tricking his older brother Karl out of his inheritance and his father's blessing; of condemning his father to die of slow starvation in a tower reminiscent of Ugolino's prison; of keeping captive his brother's beloved and trying to win her affections; of plotting to murder his brother when the latter returns in thin disguise. In the play, he is likened to the Roman Nero and the Peruvian Pizarro (Act V, i). In the first, suppressed, preface of 1781, Schiller couples Franz with Iago; in the second and official preface, also of 1781, he associates him with Medea, Shakespeare's Richard III, Milton's Satan,

[36] III, i, 21; cf. 28, 46.

and Klopstock's Andramelech.[37] Clearly, Franz belongs to the tradition of villains who are unmitigatedly evil. Schiller uses him to perform the two functions of the villain approved by even the early conservative commentators, Le Bossu and Rapin: to precipitate the action,[38] and to make us abhor vice and love virtue by providing a contrast to the nobler characters.

The figure of Karl Moor obviously interested Schiller still more than Franz. Wronged by society, as represented by his scheming brother and weak-willed father, he becomes a Robin Hood, wreaking vengeance on society in helping others whom he considers wronged. He is guilty of robbery, arson, and even murder. But, unlike his brother and unlike his fellow robbers, all of whom are self-seeking and tend to enjoy cruelty for its own sake, he has the highest ideals, a love of action on the heroic scale, and an overwhelming contempt for those who are satisfied with a safely mediocre life. With his burning love of freedom and justice, and his conscious unconventionality, Karl is a typical hero of the Storm and Stress.[39] But his extraordinary strength leads him into extraordinary weakness and vice; he belongs to the tradition of sublime figures, part villain and part hero, with which the critics of the eighteenth century had been concerned. Schiller suggests as much when he describes Karl in the preface: "Ein Geist, den das äußerste Laster nur reizet um der *Größe* willen, die ihm anhänget, um der *Kraft* willen, die es erheischet, um der *Gefahren* willen, die es begleiten."[40] To this character Plato's idea that greatness in crime may be closer to greatness in virtue than to mediocrity seems peculiarly applicable. Schiller, indeed, observes that such a character could become great in either virtue or vice. He could become either a Brutus or a Cataline, and it was his misfortune to become first a Cataline and only eventually a Brutus.[41]

Schiller's brief comments on the psychological response the audience might have to his hero are of interest. In part, he expects the same awe and admiration which the other critics regard as the typical response to heroic villains. But he also expects sympathy, even love. "Man wird

[37] *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Conrad Höfer (Munich, 1910-1914), I, 344, 349.

[38] Schiller later changed his mind about the dramatic usefulness of Franz. In "Über die tragische Kunst," *Aesthetische Aufsätze, 1791-1793* (*ibid.*, IX, 105), he links Franz with Corneille's Cleopatra and Shakespeare's Iago and Lady Macbeth, and disapproves of all these figures on the ground that it is less skillful to allow the complications of catastrophe to arise from the intervention of a villain than from force of circumstance.

[39] See Roy Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang* (Manchester, 1953), pp. 307-309.

[40] *Sämtliche Werke*, I, 348.

[41] *Ibid.*

meinen Mordbrenner bewundern, ja fast sogar lieben," he writes in the first preface. "Niemand wird ihn verabscheuen, jeder darf ihn bedauern."[42] The response of mingled admiration and pity which Schiller has in mind is close to the tragic experience described by other eighteenth-century critics.[43] It is surely significant for the new interest of the Storm and Stress that Schiller wishes to emphasize the tragic aspects of his hero as well as his affinity to the sublime hero-villains of the past.

If, in concluding, one views all the eighteenth-century discussions of heroic villains in a wider perspective, one must acknowledge that they reveal some of the shortcomings of eighteenth-century criticism in general. Fundamentally, they do not show an adequate awareness of the differences between art and life. Except in those cases in which the doctrine of imitation is used to explain the appeal of a Satan, hardly any distinction is drawn between the response to historical figures and the response to the characters in an epic or a tragedy. Moreover, though the critics temporarily suspend conventional moral judgments when confronted with sublime heroic villains, they are still far from acknowledging a fundamental distinction between aesthetic and moral experiences. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that there was a tradition in the eighteenth century of relating heroic villains to the sublime in order to explain their appeal. The interest in heroic villainy perhaps reflects, in a small way, the more general interest in genius which grew as the century progressed.

Hunter College

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345.

[43] The relative value of admiration and pity in the tragic experience is discussed at length in the correspondence of Lessing, Mendelssohn, and Nicolai, 1756-57. See Robert Petsch, *Lessings Briefwechsel mit Mendelssohn und Nicolai* (Leipzig, 1910).

MICHEL BENAMOU

Wallace Stevens: Some Relations Between Poetry and Painting

WHETHER the influence of painting on poetry is desirable is an old question and possibly an otiose one. With the advent of impressionism and succeeding schools, the poetic principles underlying art have become more visible; less "word painting" (in the awkward sense of much eighteenth-century description and Parnassian verse for art's sake) has been taking place, and more sharing in the imaginative metamorphosis wrought upon nature by the painter's brush. Many modern poets, in whose rank I muster at random Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Rilke, Apollinaire, John Peale Bishop, and Wallace Stevens, have acknowledged their debt to painters or sculptors and their poetry has grown the richer by that debt. The point no longer is whether the critics should compare poetry and painting, but how they can do so without being "laocoönized."

This risk may be taken the more cheerfully since Stevens himself showed the way in his critical writing. He was—like Valéry, another poet with a painter's eye and a refined mental museum—extremely conscious of the processes of creation. We can avail ourselves of a paper entitled "The Relations Between Poetry and Painting," which Stevens read at the Museum of Modern Art in 1951, and in which he defined four main areas of influence: sensibility, subject matter, technique, and aesthetics. He did not cite his own work as illustration, but he was so careful to keep to the craftsman's viewpoint, discarding any mysterious *Zeitgeist*, that his words bear the sigil of self-analysis. He said, in effect, that a poet can learn his trade by reading what painters

reveal about theirs, and by looking at their pictures. It is not irrelevant that Stevens was a great reader of exhibition catalogues. He called them "the natural habitat for prose poems"[1] and wrote notes for catalogues in praise of Dufy, Grommaire, and the obscure Jean Labasque. He took equal heed of studio oracles and the doctrines of Croce, Berenson, and Focillon. Not only his lectures but his poems abound in references to Cézanne, Picasso, and many others. He was probably among the first in America to see cubist paintings, thanks to his Harvard acquaintance Walter C. Arensberg, who knew Duchamp and Gleizes, and whose studio on West Seventh Street was a favorite haunt of the Kreymborg sodality.[2] Stevens' own eclectic collection of French paintings ("I have a taste for Braque and a purse for Bombois," he once complained in a letter to his Paris art dealer) displayed his attraction to impressionism and cubism. But his poems tell even more about his dependence on art than his lectures and pictures do.

One feels in the poetic universe of Wallace Stevens a sort of pulse that alternately dilates and narrows the field of vision. At its widest it resembles the world of an open-air landscapist; at the other extreme, it has the limits of a painter's studio. One pole corresponds to the broad landscapes of the impressionists, its opposite to the still lifes and the compositions of decorative cubism.

The more lasting influence on Stevens' vision was perhaps that of impressionism, which he called "the only great thing in modern art." He regarded it as "poetic."[3] By this, it seems to me that he meant an element of sensibility, a sensitiveness to the flux and change of nature. Both Monet and Stevens express the poetry of a fluent universe, a vast stage for the wind, rain, sun, and moonlight, a poem of skies and waters in which the key word is weather. Their insistence on weather, season of year, and time of day stems from an acute sense of visible changes caused by the condition of lighting. The great impressionists, Monet, Sisley, and Pissaro, carried this concern to the extreme that they no longer painted objects so much as the light on them and the air round them. Stevens, who dubbed himself "pundit of the weather," wrote "Evening Without Angels" as a hymn to "the great interests of man: air and light." Blue shadows, "Blue Building in the Summer Air," a gold tree which is blue—air is everywhere. And a chameleon light plays in dozens of poems with suggestive titles: "Variations on a Summer Day," "Of Hartford in a Purple Light," and, most magnificent of all,

[1] Wallace Stevens, *Opus Posthumous* (New York, 1957), p. 290.
[2] See Alfred Kreymborg, *Troubadour* (New York, 1957), p. 220.
[3] "Notes on Jean Labasque," *Opus Posthumous*, p. 293.

"Sea Surface Full of Clouds." Presumably, the poet never saw the series of the "Water Lilies" in the Orangerie Museum, for he never went to Paris. Yet all the feeling of the old painter of Giverny for the fleeting reflections of light in iridescent water inspires this picture of the ocean:

> The sea-clouds whitened far below the calm
> And moved, as blooms move, in the swimming green
> And in the watery radiance, while the hue
>
> Of heaven in an antique reflection rolled
> Round those flotillas. And sometimes the sea
> Poured brilliant iris on the glistening blue.

The fascination of this spectacle results in a fusion of the consciousness with the external world. It is hard to say whether the five different aspects of the sea bring about the succeeding moods of the poem, or the reverse. Visual appearance and mental reality are one.

Stevens' saying in "Men by the Thousand" that "the soul is composed of the external world" gives a clue to what happens in "Sea Surface Full of Clouds," "The Snow Man," and countless other poems in which the mind of the beholder mirrors his surroundings and fluctuates with the slightest change of light. This impressionistic theory of environment culminates in the fourth section of "The Comedian as the Letter C," with its anti-intellectual statement that "His soil is Man's intelligence," an extreme, although not unnatural, consequence of Stevens' delight in the sheen and bloom "of the surface of things."

A constant preoccupation of the impressionist, whether painter or poet, is to restore the innocence of the eye. Monet wished he were temporarily blind to experience sight again and see the world anew. Similarly, Wallace Stevens yearned to be the giant on Mount Chocorua, whose sensibility strikes us as thoroughly impressionistic:

> The feeling of him was the feel of day,
> And of a day as yet unseen, in which
> To see was like to be.[4]

His impulse toward transparence, his desire to be "at the center of a diamond," his obsession with the freshness, or, in his own refreshing phrase, the fraicheur of sight, bespeak the impressionist's dream of a translucent vision, free from memory and artifice. He wrote, in an unpublished letter to a Paris art dealer: "I share your pleasure in the Impressionistic school. In the pictures of this school: so light in tone,

[4] "Chocorua to Its Neighbor." Unless otherwise stated all poems can be found in *Collected Poems* (New York, 1954).

so bright in color, one is not conscious of the medium. The pictures are like nature . . ."[5]

But very often what he saw was "Nature as pinakothek" and what he felt was "weather by Franz Hals." The freshness of Stevens' poetry is largely due to what Delmore Schwartz called "a vision instructed in the museums," rather than to the glass-pane purity of naked sight. Was not the very transparence which he praised in impressionistic landscapes a product of artifice? The recently published "Anecdote of the Abnormal" gives a revealing documentation of Stevens' attitude:

> The common grass is green.
> But there are regions where the grass
> Assumes a pale Italianate sheen—
> Is almost Byzantine.
> . . . new colors make new things
> And new things make old things again.[6]

This voluptuary of the eye needed an ever-renewed flow of novel sensations. Art was his remedy against "the malady" of the quotidian; its colors dispelled the slate color of habit, were a vital part of his poetic diet. He may very well go on record as a naturalist who thrived on artificiality.

Harmonium and later collections, too, seem cluttered with the paraphernalia of cubism, the guitars and mandolins, the still lifes arranged on tables, the plaster heads, the bits and odds that painters hoard for their collages, parts of a world rescued from the dump. To the reader looking for Stevens' subject, it may appear that the use of art as a source of inspiration entails a narrowing of the poetic range, limited as it is to studio objects. There is some truth in this opinion, and much superficiality. Certainly, the absence of man as a pictorial theme seems to me as conspicuous in Stevens' poems as in modern painting since Monet, excepting Picasso's Ingrist period. No nudes in the traditional sense, only grotesque caricatures. The human shape has lost its supremacy and its dignity. For an analysis of this fact, we have only to look at Projection A of "So-and-So Reclining on a Couch," a mere mechanism of curves and color, "completely anonymous." In like fashion, the figure in the first stanza of "Sunday Morning" has not the slightest, even suggested, feature; as in a picture by Matisse, it is sacrificed to a decorative pattern.

But the real subject of Stevens' poetry and the real subject of cubist painting is not immediately perceptible: it is poetic imagination. The

[5] Letter to Mlle Paule Vidal, Jan. 30, 1948 (by courtesy of Samuel F. Morse).
[6] *Opus Posthumous*, pp. 23-24.

merit of the poem or picture arises from the degree of concentration with which the imagination refracts the object. The meanest and most derelict thing can thus be made significant, beautiful. "A Post-Card from the Volcano" typifies this procedure; it shows

> A dirty house in a gutted world,
> A tatter of shadows peaked to white,
> Smeared with the gold of the opulent sun.

—a gold that performs the same imaginative function as the chrome yellow enhancing the dried-up fishes painted by Georges Braque. Stevens teaches us that the center of modern art is metamorphosis.

"To increase the aspects of experience" sometimes demands an artifice of perception. The multiple perspective of the cubist, the dance round the object which causes Picasso to add an eye to his profiles, or the shifting optics of Cézanne, by virtue of which a saucer seems to bulge on either side of a bottle placed in front of it—these new modes of vision stress the role of an imaginative eye exploring the hidden facets of an object. This method can also serve in poetry, as evidenced by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" or, in a more pictorial vein, the twelve views of a pineapple encompassed in "Someone Puts a Pineapple together."[7] The latter poem documents Picasso's saying, twice cited by Stevens, that a picture is a hoard of destructions.[8] Originally this phrase described the procedure of analytical cubism, exploding the object into prismatic fragments. The effect was one of complexity; the picture became a simultaneous enumeration of related aspects. Stevens' pineapple is treated in much the same way. It is the "sum of its complications." By this, the poet means that the total reality of the fruit will be recomposed from the twelve pieces which make up its epistemological profile: a hut and palms, an owl covered with eyes, nailed-up lattices, etc. Nine of the twelve resemblances are visual. The complete poem adds up to a performance as witty as any Picasso *circa* 1910.

Why write a poem about a pineapple, this "incredible subject for poetry"? Stevens chose it for the same reason as the cubist chose his studio arrangement, because it was

> A wholly artificial nature in which
> The profusion of metaphor has been increased.
> . . . fertile in more than changes of light
> On the table or in the color of the room.

---

[7] Wallace Stevens, *The Necessary Angel* (New York, 1951), pp. 83-87.

[8] In "The Man with the Blue Guitar," Sec. XV, it reads "hoard of destructions"; in "The Relations Between Poetry and Painting," it is "horde." The first spelling appears again in Renato Poggioli's translation, with Stevens' comment that he found the saying in Christian Zervos' book on Picasso.

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This comes in defense of artificiality. Some privileged objects, however meaningless to the unpoetic, have such a shape as lends itself to metamorphosis: palms, fans, the open hand, certain fruit and flowers, a blackbird, and the sinuous guitar, friendly to the cubist's dreams. But some other things resist imagination, defeat the poet's will. Among them certain roses in sunlight, "too much as they are to be changed by metaphor,"[9] and two obdurate pears that will "resemble nothing else."[10] Sister Bernetta Quinn rightly called our attention to this "victory of the real over the fictive."[11] Only when nature imitates art is it favorable to pictorial transmutation.

Thus the poetry of Wallace Stevens incorporates conflicting elements from impressionism and cubism: naturalness and artificiality, delight in appearances and metamorphosis of appearances. A baffling sum of relations—for where in these extreme ranges is the identity of a poet's sensibility?

The identity is in Stevens' concern with change. Impressionism shows the *passive* principle of change. The eye must be as candid as possible and merely relay the variations of light and colors. But in cubism, "more than changes of light" are involved. Imagination is the *active* principle which transforms and extends the object by multiplying resemblances. The metaphors of poetry and the metamorphoses of painting tap the same reservoir of analogies.

At first glance any attempt to compare the form of a poem and that of a picture seems either futile or faulty. The ghosts of Lessing and Irving Babbitt loom before us voicing fearful interdictions. Yet, if we are to heed Stevens' hint about relating his poetic technique to painting, we must cross the old barrier between arts of space and arts of time and the new one between discursive and presentational forms.[12]

What is meant by form? A poem with its sequence of vowels and consonants offers a temporal medium entirely alien to the spatial medium of a picture: lines, tone value, and colors. The otherness, the radical heterogeneity of these pure, basic, *primary* forms cannot be overemphasized. At their level, beauty seems divorced from what is generally understood by meaning—it has only formal significance. But a poem and a picture have a *secondary* form which is intimately fused with their meaning. It is in this sense of the word form that the com-

[9] "Bouquet of roses in Sunlight."

[10] "Study of Two Pears."

[11] Sister Bernetta M. Quinn, "Metamorphosis in Wallace Stevens," *Sewanee Review*, Spring 1952.

[12] Cf. in John Peale Bishop's *Collected Essays* (New York, 1948), "Poetry and Paintings," an essay showing the time element in pictures and the spatial element in poems.

position of an ode by Keats may strike Allen Tate as pictorial, that Marcel Proust wrote about the metaphors in Elstir's seascapes, that Wallace Stevens may speak of the diction of a portrait by Giorgione. So long as they do not involve primary forms, such comparisons are enlightening and legitimately drawn. The structure, imagery, and diction of Stevens' poems afford many relations of this kind with the devices and effects of painting.

The best example of Stevens' pictorial method of composition is to be found in the structure of "Sunday Morning," his most celebrated long poem. Its form is a meditative monologue, now in the first, now in the third person. Superficially the poem is tied together by references to the central character: she dreams, she says, etc. But is it really a discursive presentation of arguments with dialectic progression? It must have seemed so in the form of its first appearance in the November 1915 issue of *Poetry*. There, the poem had five stanzas, and this five-stanza version has had fairly wide currency ever since. But the truth is that Stevens originally wrote "Sunday Morning" in the eight-stanza version which was to appear in the first edition of *Harmonium* in 1923. It was Miss Harriet Monroe who persuaded Stevens to publish the five-stanza version. In assenting to this disfigurement of his work, the poet tried to make the best of an editorial botch by putting immediately after stanza one the final stanza of his original version. But this alteration made the poem look like a discursive argument, with the first four stanzas referring to the central character and the fifth as a possible answer to her questions.

The poem as we have it in *Harmonium* erases the discursive quality and restores the original design. The central character loses her prominence; the narrative fabric is disrupted. The full-length version is the better poem. It has more unity, which results from its pictorial composition. "Sunday Morning" is not a succession of ideas, but of pictures. Stanza one is organized as a dyptich—on one panel, a woman in a chair, oranges, a cockatoo, a rich, Matisse-like arrangement on an Oriental rug; on the other side, a sombre lake; silence accentuates the pictorial quality. The sense of space is enhanced by the simile "as a calm darkens," protracted by "the day is like wide water." This antithetic pattern, a picture of earthly life alternating with a scene of another world, continues in the next six stanzas. A complete resolution of the form occurs in the last stanza, for it corresponds panel for panel to the first dyptich, but in reverse order. This formal chiasmic symmetry heightens our aesthetic enjoyment. The poem is framed between two visions of earth; its formal beauty depends partly on the vividness of these visions, partly on the perfect balance of its structure.

The effect of the pictorial method of composition is a tension within a balance. The atmosphere of "Sunday Morning" is anything but tense. Stevens was not in that sense a dramatic poet. There is no tenseness, but a tension—not dramatic, but spatial. It springs from the juxtaposition of antithetic blocks. The pattern of the sequence shows that the poem winds up as a complete circle. The *Poetry* version did not. And yet the final version of "Sunday Morning" has more force, perhaps a centripetal force. It achieves emotional impact within the visual daydreaming of an inconclusive meditation. It represents the triumph of a nondramatic poet over his own limitations.

The preceding remark by no means sets a claim that Stevens always composed pictorially. But, granting that his best poems are those with dramatic force, it may be that this dramatic force is best supported and actualized by their pictorial structure. A piece like "Mrs. Alfred Uruguay" does not draw its force from the rhetorical violence of its beginning ("So what said the others and the sun went down"), but rather from the spatial opposition of the two symbolic central figures. We are dealing with a poet gifted with a strong visual imagination, who presents conflicts of ideas as conflicts of forms and shapes.

Such a method of composition supposes the ability to create pictorial images, that is, representations of visual elements of reality organized pictorially. In Stevens' imagery, refined by imagist experimentation and observations of artistic devices, we cannot but thrill at the wealth of sensuous perceptions of shapes, lights, and colors. Yet we are never allowed to forget the symbolic meaning of each pictorial effect. Stevens was not, like Gautier, a painter *manqué*.

In "The Idea of Order at Key West," we are offered both the theory and the practice of "the maker's rage to order the words of the sea." This is a poem about poetic creation and, by way of illustration, the poet evokes an image of a port at nightfall. The order of the description suggests the brush of a painter organizing his pictorial space. The perspective he defines with sure repetitions becomes a symbol of the victory of art over chaos. The verbs carry the magic of his act: mastering, deepening, enchanting; the nouns and adjectives are fraught with pictorial vividness: fiery poles, glassy lights, emblazoned zones.

If perspective symbolizes poetry, flatness connotes the unpoetic. Let us look at the pen-and-ink drawing entitled "The Common Life":

> That's the down-town frieze,
> Principally the church steeple,
> A black line beside a white line;
> And the stack of the electric plant,
> A black line drawn on flat air.

...
The paper is whiter
For these black lines.
...
The paper is whiter.
The men have no shadows
And the women have only one side.

The whole poem is a single image, in which the vocabulary achieves the economy of Fernand Léger's technique. But again symbolism gives poetic meaning to plastic effects. The straight lines, the glaring contrast of black and white, the absence of depth and shadows, are metaphors for the spiritual vacuity of modern life. "Sad Strains of a Gay Waltz" and "Poem with Rhythm" afford two additional examples of this plastic symbolism, which equates shadowlessness to imaginative poverty and shadows to the life of the imagination.

Light imagery is vital to Stevens. Light is motion, change, and cheerfulness. For its evanescent appearances the poet has developed a special "vernacular of light," of which he gives us a glimpse in "Variations of a Summer Day":

Words for the dazzle
Of mica, the dithering of glass,
The Arachne integument of dead trees
Are the eye grown larger, more intense.

Just as a painter will seek the challenge of light flashing on shiny objects, Stevens is lured by the glitter of crystals, diamonds, pieces of "broken glass in the grass." He seeks hard bright surfaces like bronze, tinsel, mirrors, ice, in which color is toughened by a sense of touch, a process of synaesthesia defined in the nutshell of this image: "emerald becoming emeralds."

The sharp outline and the bright surface of the forms result from the quality of light in which things are seen—a cold light for the most part, "more like snowy air," "an acid light" etching the contours of things, sharpening them with shadows. These are the "lights masculine" at work in "Of Hartford in a Purple Light," sculpturing shapes of the river, the railroad, the cathedral. But there are also "lights feminine," in which "every muscle slops away." Fewer poems belong to this late impressionistic type of imagery than to the masculine, clear-cut group. They are mostly about, or rather of, night; glitterings are toned down to glistenings, shapes merge into shades. Night is a female, soft as a woman's arm, bathed in the formlessness of green which permeates and fuses everything.[13] In those images, we truly sense "a painter's

[13] "Six Significant Landscapes," stanza 2; "Phosphor Reading by his own Light."

light."[14] It comes to life; entering the spatial milieu created by words, called on stage by metaphors, it acts like "women whispering" or like a lion with "ruddy claws" and "frothy jaws," actualizing in poetry Focillon's notion that light can become a form in itself.[15]

Stevens' gifts as a colorist shine particularly in his color matches. His palette glitters with the cheerfulness of the impressionists. Its light tones are gaudy, with the etymological meaning of gay, never garish, for complementary associations are carefully avoided in favor of more fastidious marriages. But even images that seem purely pictorial call our attention from the poet's descriptive skill to his chromatic symbolism and his exhilarating sense of language. Let me quote two imagist tours de force from *Harmonium*:

> Last night we sat beside a pool of pink
> Clippered with lilies scudding the bright chromes.[16]

The color contrast is heightened by a clash between the subdued alliteration of plosives in the first line and the consonance of harsh "k" sounds in the second line. But the pleasure derived from this feat of virtuosity would seem a little cheap were it not for the startling nautical metaphor with its ironical overtones attuned to the context. Likewise, a typical image from "The Comedian as the Letter C" creates an acute contract between color areas:

> The green palmettoes in crepuscular ice
> Clipped frigidly blue black meridians,
> Morose chiaroscuro, gauntly drawn.

Just enough studio jargon for the sake of strangeness and to give a feeling for the degree of heat which painters consider important in the arrangement of colors. But the psychological effect of the picture, its morose, gaunt, icy, crepuscular mood, extends much further than the merely visual impression. Stevens was never content with "verbal painting," if such a thing exists in poetry. He said in one of his *Adagia*: "Poetry as an imaginative thing consists of more than lies on the surface."[17] Poetry lies when it tries to compete with painting. Color is in painting the real thing, in poetry a reflection of words. The true nature of an image is to become a metaphor.

Stevens' color symbolism is mostly a personal affair, based as it is on a lifelong meditation of the subjective quality of all perceptions. It

[14] "The Poet Who Lived with His Words," a poem by Samuel F. Morse, *The Tuftonian*, Winter 1957.
[15] "The Glass of Water" and H. Focillon, *La Vie des formes dans l'art*, p. 37.
[16] "Le Monocle de mon Oncle," XI.
[17] *Opus Posthumous*, p. 161.

starts with "Three Travellers Watch a Sunrise," and ends with "Two Illustrations that the World is what you Make of It." We shall only explore its relations with painting.

One element in the "broken color" of the impressionist is that the eye transforms two colors into a single tone. Stevens used the device repeatedly. A lemon is "yellow-blue, yellow-green." The lilac in "Arcades of Philadelphia the Past" shows in the eye of the beholder,

> ...in the agate eye, red blue
> Red purple, never quite red itself.

Pure, essential red is never seen, because it is abstract. In "Woman Looking at a Vase of Flowers" pure red is called "inhuman," and in "The Bouquet" the distinction between the particular of the eye and the abstract of the imagination clarifies the whole matter. The colors of things "are questions of the looks they get," but these colors, "seen in insight," become symbols. So the blue of the sky comes to mean the blue of the imagination. But it never ceases to denote the sky, because, essentially like a painter, Stevens always elaborates from sense data. Even when color tends toward abstraction, he never allows it to lose its sensuous quality. His last collection of verse, *The Rock*, restates an artist's love of color in this exultant flow of images:

> And a blue broke on him from the sun,
> A bullioned blue, a blue abulge,
>
> Like daylight, with time's bellishings,
> And sensuous summer stood full-height.

Such richly metaphorical visions play the same role in our enjoyment of poetry as the sensuous pulsing of color in Van Gogh's landscapes. But only the artistry of poetic language can stimulate in the reader these chromatic impressions. "Domination of Black," which Stevens at one time called his favorite poem in *Harmonium*, has no pictorial source. The only word denoting a specific color is in the title. Yet the poem releases a fantasia of colors that has the musicality of an abstract picture by Manessier or Bazaine.

Stevens' use of pictorial imagery, his plastic and chromatic symbolism, his art of composition, reveal how closely his poetry can approximate the effects of painting without lapsing into what Louis Untermeyer mistook for "verbal mosaics in which syllables are used as pigment."[18] We know now that there is as much symbolism and sense for "the edges of language" in *Harmonium* as in later works. However, the proportion of imagistic experiments in color diminishes from *Har-*

[18] Louis Untermeyer, *Modern American Poetry* (New York, 1925), p. 326.

monium to *The Rock*, as belonging to a style which Stevens took for granted, and also because the emphasis shifts gradually from style to feeling and thought, from description of the world to the "world as meditation." If the reader expects in the valedictory poems the kind of pictorial technique he enjoyed in the liminary pieces, he is likely to be disappointed. After *Harmonium*, we have, significantly, *Ideas of Order*; after the practice, the theory. But then Stevens, even when he theorizes on aesthetics, always remains a poet. For him the imagination identified itself with something big, blue, glittering, and sharply outlined. His ideas on poetry had a visual, sensory, rather than an abstract origin.

One unmistakable sign of Stevens' indebtedness to the aesthetics of modern painting is the frequency with which the words perception, object, and reality recur in his poems. Another clue inscribed in his critical vocabulary is the use of the verb "to paint" meaning to create, and the noun "paint" for poetry. A quantity of poems illustrate the profoundest problems of artistic creation in terms of painting. Beyond mere verbal features, this alliance fostered a symbolism of shapes standing for aesthetic notions. There were two realities for Stevens—the reality of things observed and the reality of things imagined. One, the world, was in the image of a beast, a lion, a monster; the other, the poem, was an angel, "the necessary angel" of reality. Perception places the artist in contact with reality, with the beast. Sometimes, as we have seen, nature resists the imagination. Then a conflict arises between the object and the will, "a war that never ends" between the imagination and the monster of nature. When Stevens comes to grips with the monster, his "rage for order" resembles Cézanne's. In a sense, his aesthetics were Cézanne's subjective ("expressing oneself") objectivism ("realizing the object"). It is a personal meeting, an encouter with reality on terms of equality. This at least echoes the wish of "The Man with a Blue Guitar":

> That I may reduce the monster to
> Myself, and then may be myself
>
> In face of the monster, be more than part
> Of it, more than the monstrous player of
>
> One of its monstrous lutes...

And when he gives full attention to the object, the poet defines poetry, in the very words of Cézanne's roughhewn aesthetics, as

> An exercise in viewing the world.
> On the motive![19]

[19] "Variations on a Summer Day."

Cézanne is the tribal god of modern painting because, as Stevens saw it, he has "helped to create a new reality, a modern reality . . . , a reality of decreation."[20] Rilke remarks that Cézanne's apples have become "indestructible in their obstinate existence."[21] They are different from edible fruit, though not less real. Their reality is poetic. They have been decreated and the painter has given them being. In modern art, at least among the votaries of Cézanne, essence is no longer divine, it is poetic,

> The essential poem at the center of things.[22]

Cézanne had only one word: to realize. By this he meant very much the same thing as Stevens in his declaration of "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven":

> We seek
>
> The poem of pure reality, untouched
> By trope or deviation, straight to the word,
> Straight to the transfixing object, to the object
>
> At the exactest point at which it is itself,
> Transfixing by being purely what it is,
> A view of New Haven, say, through the certain eye,
>
> The eye made clear of uncertainty, with the sight
> Of simple seeing, without reflection. We seek
> Nothing beyond reality.

This pure reality is the monster mastered and purified by imagination.

From the encounter with the monster to the fusion with the angel of pure reality, Stevens' aesthetics has gone a long way. It bridges the gap between a painting of sheer appearances and an art which creates its own reality "in face of the monster." It reconciles the impressionist vision and Cézanne's world within a world.

A final point remains for discussion. Even granting the enrichment of the poetic sensibility inspired by painting and the virtuosity of Stevens' transpositions from pictures, always under the deft control of poetic form, even granting this positive gain, there is a great danger that our approach may have done injustice to Stevens in the reader's mind. Through his affinities with other art lovers such as Proust, he might end up in the pigeonhole of aestheticism. Art buffers the aesthete from harsh realities. A vision of the world mediated by art is of the second degree—or even, in a Platonic perspective, of the third. But

[20] *The Necessary Angel*, p. 174.
[21] *Letters* (New York, 1945), I, p. 304.
[22] "A Primitive Like an Orb."

surely this cannot be the whole story about Stevens, in whom "the native element,"[23] the sense of the importance of living in an external world, counterbalanced the impulse to neutralize nature and hold it at arm's length like a picture. And the impulse to grapple with the "monster" is the aesthetic equivalent of Stevens' respect for external reality. All we can presume to do is to take stock of the art-nature duality in Stevens.

The question why Stevens and many other poets have been so dependent on the arts for their vision of the world has metaphysical implications. Pascal was critical of the reality of painting because he believed in a transcendental truth that dwarfed art to the status of all other human delusions. But we live in an age of disbelief. What makes Stevens a modern poet, i.e., a poet of our time, is this modern consciousness that the arts compensate for our lost belief. Stevens was no solemn worshipper of painting and he had often enough a self-mocking word for the amateurs at Durand-Ruel's. But his practice of poetry echoes the intent faith of Baudelaire in the divine testimony of art, or rather, to avoid the term faith, Malraux's creed that art is "la monnaie de l'absolu," the currency, but also the small change of the absolute. Understood as the poetic and moral principle of an order protecting us from chaos, art becomes more than a source of beautiful shapes and colors; it becomes a "supreme fiction," an inspiration tentatively analogous to the idea of god,

> For a moment final, in the way
> The thinking of art seems final when
>
> The idea of god is smoky dew.[24]

University of Michigan

[23] Samuel F. Morse, "The Native Element," *Kenyon Review*, XX (1958), 440-465.

[24] "The Man with the Blue Guitar," stanza VI.

ARNOLD CHAPMAN

Pampas and Big Woods: Heroic Initiation in Güiraldes and Faulkner

OCCASIONALLY two authors who are unknown to one another and live in different countries write works of fiction that are closely similar in detail, outline, and underlying belief. In such cases, though there is no possibility of influence, other lines of approach promise access to vistas unavailable except from the vantage point of comparison. There are similarities of this sort in two American works of fiction: William Faulkner's *The Bear*[1] and the Argentinean Ricardo Güiraldes' *Don Segundo Sombra.* This fact presents a challenge, for no one has previously studied these two authors together at any length, nor would the idea arise as a matter of routine; it is also provocative, because in juxtaposition these stories curiously converge upon a basic conception that can only be an American common denominator.

In a land where active good critics outnumber active good novelists, the laureate Faulkner has been the object of such patient, microscopic scrutiny that few sides of his writing have gone unnoticed. More surprisingly, perhaps, the opinions of the critics, after some fluctuation, have crystallized into general agreement. This phenomenon is nowhere

[1] I shall follow common practice and, under this title, refer to fictional materials written by Faulkner at various periods but brought together in *Go Down, Moses* (New York, 1942) as three stories: "The Old People," "The Bear," and "Delta Autumn." These have thematic unity in the life of Isaac McCaslin, with the first and third serving logically as prologue and epilogue, respectively, to the longer narrative. Two units of the main episode were published in *Harpers* for Dec. 1935 and the *Saturday Evening Post* for May 1942; and versions have appeared in the 1950s, cumulating in that of *Big Woods* (New York, 1955). This last is a rearrangement, "Delta Autumn" being broken up and presented as interpolations, while "The Bear" itself is shortened. Since the *Go Down, Moses* version is the most complete, I retain it, and refer to its pages here.

more obvious than in the case of *The Bear*. Faulkner students in this country, while differing inevitably in some details, have resolved the story into components which most are willing to accept. In comparing *The Bear* and *Don Segundo Sombra* I shall use this corpus as a starting point in preference to Güiraldes criticism, since the latter, while copious, is not so coherent.

The Bear is an extremely important work, both because of inherent interest and because, together with the accompanying stories, it marks the beginning of a new period in Faulkner's thinking which uses fairly simple, schematic symbols.[2] On the surface it is a *Bildungsroman* of a type frequent in the United States: a boy's coming of age, his education in the ways of his elders. The boy's development is accompanied by a depiction of folkways and landscape, but underneath the somewhat old-fashioned layer of local color lie disturbing depths, fathomed by techniques recent in fiction. *The Bear* is an allegory which tells the rise of a hero whose mission is moral expiation.[3] The educational process is conceived as an initiation rite in which a substitute father guides the novice. In order to create an atmosphere compatible with the elevation of his theme, Faulkner has used the solemn, ceremonious rhythms of religious ritual, by which the reader is led to accept events verging on the miraculous. The world of the story is the world of myth where, through an exaltation of the primitive goodness of the wilderness, Nature becomes the Great Mother.[4] The sin to be expiated by the hero is the contamination of the land by the encroachments of European man.

These outlines unexpectedly compose also a picture of *Don Segundo Sombra*. To describe one of the works in these terms is to describe the other. It need hardly be pointed out that *Don Segundo Sombra* is a work whose importance is now taken for granted wherever and whenever the Spanish-American novel is studied. First published in 1926, it has had an enduring reputation that constantly grows as it is read not only in its original Spanish but also in numerous translations. Part of the grave charm of the book comes from the realization that it was the author's last major work. Güiraldes died in 1927 after having found himself in this novel. His earlier writings—poems, stories, and

[2] George Snell, *The Shapers of American Fiction* (New York, 1947), p. 102; R. W. B. Lewis, "The Hero in the New World: William Faulkner's *The Bear*," *Kenyon Rev.*, XIII (1951), 640, 642; William Van O'Connor, "The Wilderness Theme in Faulkner's 'The Bear,'" *Accent*, XIII (1953), 12, etc.

[3] Lewis, pp. 640, 644.

[4] John Lydenberg, "Nature Myth in Faulkner's 'The Bear,'" *AL*, XXIV (1952), 62-72; W. R. Moses, "Where History Crosses Myth: Another Reading of 'The Bear,'" *Accent*, XIII (1953), 21-33; O'Connor, p. 15, etc.

novels—had been gropings; more than that, they had given a sense of extreme lyricism, flowing always a little too fast for the author to grasp, as he restlessly sought more stable modes. On the eve of his death, his uncertainties ended and his words molded themselves into a coherent artistic conception.[5]

It has been customary to emphasize the title personage of Güiraldes' novel; but this encourages an incomplete understanding, since it overlooks the active growth of the narrator and leaves the impression that the author was merely painting a static picture of the ideal Gaucho, Don Segundo. In reality the novel has a good sense of movement, psychological as well as physical. It too can be termed a *Bildungsroman*:[6] the story of a boy who grows through adolescence into young manhood, the steps of his education detailed. Güiraldes virtually instructs the reader to observe the order of the lessons, as the boy learns to master his environment and himself. *The Bear* has been described as "another tale of a boy growing up in America, with all the special obstacles to moral maturity which our culture has erected and which comprise the drama for many another sad or lucky protagonist of fiction."[7] *The Bear* takes Isaac (Ike) McCaslin from his tenth through his sixteenth year, and then brings him back at twenty-one. When Fabio Cáceres, in *Don Segundo Sombra*, begins his true education, he is fourteen—although interpolated recollections reach back to his sixth or seventh year; the narrative breaks off at fifteen (Chapter X) to begin again at nineteen or twenty, and continues until Fabio is twenty-three. In both cases there are two foci of action: one in early adolescence and the other, briefer, after the attainment of traditional adulthood. Each boy has, meanwhile, learned self-control and a skill: hunting, in Ike's case; cowherding, in Fabio's.

Both stories have been compared to *Huckleberry Finn*.[8] Although the evaluation varies, the underlying truth is that Mark Twain, William Faulkner, and Ricardo Güiraldes are thinking of a specific outdoor American locale—the frontier—and have purposefully exposed their

[5] Güiraldes' widow, Adelina del Carril, Nota Preliminar to 1952 ed. (Buenos Aires) of *Don Segundo Sombra*, states that *Don Segundo Sombra* was begun sometime in the years 1919-21, the first ten chapters being completed at that time; the remainder was written in 1925-26 in Argentina on Güiraldes' farm "La Porteña" (in his study, and not in the branches of an *ombú*, as Waldo Frank romantically says).

[6] See Bernard Gicovate, "Notes on *Don Segundo Sombra*: The Education of Fabio Cáceres," *Hisp.*, XXXIV (1951), 367. Gicovate is one of the first to put the emphasis where it belongs.

[7] Lewis, p. 640.

[8] Lewis, p. 652; Waldo Frank, Introduction to the Harriet de Onís translation of *Don Segundo Sombra* (West Drayton, 1948), p. vii.

protagonists to it. Faulkner, as a regionalist, applies local color: the dialect of Negroes, Indians, half-breeds, poor-whites, and hunting aristocrats; folk tales; dress; implements and techniques of hunting; topography. Güiraldes also frames his story with precision, leaving no doubt that the pampas of Argentina are the only possible place for his narration. Local speech is reproduced abundantly, even though friction is thus created between the narrator's thoughts and his spoken words;[9] two long pseudo-folk tales are inserted; dress, sports, and other folkways are elaborated; the various paraphernalia and skills of the cowhand are described. In a word, Güiraldes is the heir to that long tradition of local-color writing which in Hispanic literature carries the name of *costumbrismo*, but which is a no less legitimate descendant of the romantic movement than is our Southern tradition to which Faulkner belongs.

Of the two stories, *Don Segundo Sombra* is the more vulnerable to that kind of ignorance which transmogrifies *Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels, Moby Dick*, and *Huckleberry Finn* into juveniles. Possibly the awesome seriousness of *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* had warned us off from such a misunderstanding of Faulkner; or it may be that the language of *The Bear* is too forbidding to be trifled with. It is difficult to decide, now that Faulkner specialists have so quickly seized on the deeper meanings in this story and interpreted it as a symbolic projection of what Kerényi calls "mythologems."[10] The local is overwhelmed by the universal; the diverting hunting tale is immediately blotted out by the allegory. *Don Segundo Sombra*, on the other hand, has been thought suitable for North American schoolchildren, and the publishers of the school text can use such travel-folder terms as "picturesque" and "thrilling adventures." Bowdlerizing and removal of descriptive passages "which, unfortunately, most students dislike"[11] are considered not to mar the novel beyond recognition.

Even when, as in Argentina generally, this novel is held to have mature profundities, these are usually ascribed to Don Segundo, for the Gaucho *qua* Gaucho is a permanent concern of culture and litera-

[9] See Amado Alonso, "Un problema estilístico de *Don Segundo Sombra*," *La Nación* (Buenos Aires), Sunday supp. for July 27, 1930, pp. 42-43. Alonso believes that Güiraldes has solved his problem by using the living language of educated provincials for his literary prose, thus causing it to harmonize with the entirely regionalistic dialogue. Others may doubt that the chasm has been bridged; see Aristóbulo Echegaray, *Don Segundo Sombra, reminiscencia infantil de Ricardo Güiraldes* (Buenos Aires, 1955), pp. 19, 72.

[10] C. Kerényi, "The Primordial Child in Primordial Times," in *Essays on a Science of Mythology*, with C. G. Jung (New York, 1949), p. 62.

[11] Edition by Ethel W. Plimpton and María T. Fernández (New York, 1945), p. iii.

ture. More than one critic has noticed the suggestiveness of "Sombra,"[12] has followed up the implications of the phrase "Aquello que se alejaba era más una idea que un hombre," in the last scene of the novel, where Don Segundo departs, and has developed the abstraction of the archetypal Gaucho, not as a man but as the Argentinean *summum bonum.* Through Don Segundo poetry of a high order is created; for, being the spirit of the pampas—proud, stern, and free—his magic transmutes dirt into the royal purple, sweat into dew, and fatigue into enchantment. All of this is certainly true, and has supported the belief that Güiraldes is a peculiarly Hispano-Argentinean writer, drawing on the basic mystical leanings of the Catholic culture, joined to a peculiarly South American cultus of the Gaucho. One of the most appealing comparisons is to *Don Quijote.*[13]

I should like to support the hypothesis that the true significance of *Don Segundo Sombra* is not in the beautified Gaucho alone but also in the boy, his pupil. In the boy Güiraldes so far transcends the local or regional as to anticipate a non-Hispanic, non-Catholic, non-Argentine writer. The meeting ground could not be autobiography, except by the most unlikely coincidence; it is, instead, a zone of reality where nationalities have little meaning—the twilight land of myth. Essentially *Don Segundo Sombra* and *The Bear* are artistic representations of the "monomyth,"[14] in which the "hero as child" progresses through the "hero as initiate," and leaves the story as the "hero as man," on the threshold of his works.

In these books an atmosphere is carefully established and maintained that makes it easy to accept supernatural mysteries. Faulkner's "sense of consecration" is never more in evidence than in *The Bear,* and is well described as a "canticle or chant."[15] Of course, Güiraldes' style is not the same as Faulkner's, for style is a highly personal achievement. While Güiraldes' phrases have a more conventional rise and fall, he reveals his perspective with the first words of the Dedicatoria, "Al gaucho que llevo en mí, sacramente, como la custodia lleva la hostia," and continues to show it in the studiously staged entrance of Don Segundo, with the night terrors, the howling dog, and the sudden looming figure of the horse-

[12] The English translation (see note 8) adds its own subtitle, *Shadows on the Pampas.*

[13] Arturo Torres-Rioseco, *The Epic of Latin American Literature* (New York, 1946), p. 166; and Eunice J. Gates, "Note on the Resemblances Between Don Segundo Sombra and Don Quijote," *HR,* XIV (1946), 342-343.

[14] A term borrowed by Joseph Campbell from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake;* see *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (New York, 1949), p. 30.

[15] John Arthos, "Ritual and Humor in the Writing of William Faulkner," in *William Faulkner: Two Decades of Criticism* (East Lansing, 1951), p. 101; Lewis, *loc. cit.,* p. 640.

man, into the solemnity of the trail. When the men begin the virile task, there is a pause. "Cada cual vivía para sí y mi alegría de pronto se hizo grave, contenida. Un extraño nos hubiese creído apesadumbrados por una desgracia."[16] The maté gourd goes from hand to hand; it is a libation, like the whisky the Southern hunters take before the sacred chase, "that brown liquor which not women, not boys and children, but only hunters drank," which Ike finds "not only natural but actually fitting" for the time when the voices are "quiet and weighty and deliberate" (p. 192). Later, as Fabio senses even more strongly the presence of guardians over his life, the word "extraño" comes to his consciousness: "una extraña sensación de existencia nueva" (p. 308), "Un extraño sentimiento de soledad" (p. 296), "No sé qué extraña sugestión" (p. 319). The boys play out their destined drama in the midst of the ineffable.

The first biographical similarity between the boys is their orphaned state. Ike McCaslin's father has disappeared in the boy's early childhood, his mother when he is ten and on the edge of his initiation. Neither parent has much influence on him.[17] Fabio Cáceres has lost his mother before he could form a clear memory of her, and believes he has no father. The fact that his father actually lives, and appears under a different guise, does not change the boy's psychological condition. He can say, "Pensaba en mis catorce años de chico abandonado, de 'guacho,' como seguramente dirían por ahí."[18] Similarly Ike terms himself "fatherless."

Discoveries about the boys' birth come as a further deviation from normal. Fabio's is mysterious, veiled by the whispers of his illegitimacy and holding secrets he fears to learn. Ike's is unusual; his father was seventy years old when he was born. The Biblical Isaac is in the back of Faulkner's mind; the boy describes himself as "an Isaac born into a later life than Abraham's" (p. 283) (the first Isaac's birth was remarkable, almost miraculous, for Abraham was then a hundred years old). Both boys are haunted by a sense of not belonging to the ordinary world into which they have been called; they are "outsiders." Fabio, having precociously mastered the meanness of his village prison, experiences the anguish of solitude and longs to go away in search of reality. Ike's mind scarcely registers the common marks of his society, at first, but yearns for the mysteries of the Big Woods. It is as though they belong

[16] *Don Segundo Sombra* (Buenos Aires, 1937), p. 66. All subsequent page references are to this edition.

[17] In the first version of *The Bear*, the father is an active participant and plays the role of mentor; but in later reworkings he is taken out and his part assigned to the cousin Cass McCaslin.

[18] Pp. 11-12. The word "guacho," roughly equivalent to "waif" or "orphan" in both Argentina and Chile, is in Güiraldes' mind an associational twin of "gaucho."

to another and higher caste than the people around them, and live in expectation of the call that will tell them how to recover their birthright.

Such a combination of features is not uncommonly found in the world of myth, where the child-hero appears out of nowhere, and is left by his blood parents to be adopted by foster parents and reared until he can prove himself, by successful labors, to be the son of kings or gods. Concomittantly, the theme of the separated or abandoned child finds its way into the psyche of individuals.[19] Another dimension is provided by the fact that both stories are cast in the allegorical mold of initiation or puberty rite, analogous to that of primitive societies, where it is an image of the hero cult embodied in mythology and epic.

One of the essential stages of such rites is the assignment of a substitute father, sometimes called "uncle" or a similar name signifying a close but not a blood tie. Clearly *Don Segundo Sombra* and *The Bear* could not have come into being without this device; Don Segundo and Sam Fathers, Ike's protector, encompass the whole experience and give it form. Their function is at once adumbrated by their names. Sam not only had himself two fathers, a real one and a stepfather, but many fathers, in the sense that he is a synthesis of his forebears. Moreover, he is plural toward the boy, since he serves him as no single parent could and liberates his young charge from confining familial ties. "Segundo," while a real name,[20] connotes a substitution, a coming-after; and "Sombra" furnishes ready-made the impalpability of the sheltering shadow that accompanies the young hero wherever he goes. That they may better act as mystagogues, the substitute fathers are themselves unencumbered by family: Sam Fathers is "childless, kinless, peopleless" (p. 71); and if Don Segundo Sombra has either wife or children he gives no sign, during the action of the book, that they make demands on him.[21]

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[19] See Carl Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype," in *Essays on a Science of Mythology*, pp. 120 ff.; and Charles Baudoin, *Le Triomphe du héros* (Paris, 1952), p. i.

[20] Güiraldes' widow tells us that a Segundo Ramírez (Sombra) entered the novelist's life early, and made a deep impression on the child. Segundo Ramírez, the ranch hand, was still alive in 1934 (see Echegaray, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-42). Güiraldes utilized Don Segundo Sombra several times before he reached the definitive treatment—in his first two works of fiction, *Cuentos de muerte y de sangre* (1915) and *Raucho* (1917). Faulkner, it would appear, drew Ike McCaslin from life, the model being a certain "Uncle Ike" Roberts with whom he used to hunt. See Robert Coughlan, *The Private World of William Faulkner* (New York, 1954), pp. 96-99.

[21] The single reference Don Segundo makes to a relationship of this kind comes when he remarks, "Hasta yo mesmo, aunque trabajando juerte, es cierto, he conseguido asegurar mi tranquilidá pa mi vejez y mis cachorros" (p. 270). The reader hardly knows what to make of this. It strikes one as a slip of the pen which would have been rectified had Güiraldes lived.

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Sam and Don Segundo are alike of mixed racial background. Faulkner's creation is an "old man born of a Negro slave and a Chickasaw chief" (p. 92); this double heritage is always in the author's mind, while Sam's portion of white blood is likely to be forgotten. To Güiraldes, born in a country where the racial issue is minor, this aspect is less important. In fact, it is only a suggestion, although enough for a clue to his thinking: "Su tez era aindiada, sus ojos ligeramente levantados hacia las sienes, y pequeños" (p. 26). Don Segundo is a mestizo and thus true to the standard conception of the Gaucho, but the Indian in him is not lost in the amalgam. In both cases, the substitute father is non-European. Physically Sam Fathers and Don Segundo are akin in their rough homeliness, verging on the paradoxical in beings so idealized until one realizes that beauty is a prerogative of the young hero, who must have this perfection too. Sam Fathers is "a man not tall, squat rather, almost sedentary, flabby-looking though he actually was not" (p. 116). Don Segundo, too, is not tall, nor is his strength derived from any classical proportioning: "El pecho era vasto, las coyunturas huesudas como las de un potro, los pies cortos con un empeine a lo galleta, las manos gruesas y cuerudas como cascarón de peludo" (p. 26).

The resemblances continue into the moral realm. One of the most remarkable is a dramatic independence of civilization, setting these immensely wise men apart, not only from the common run of overcivilized persons but also, at times, from mankind itself. Faulkner calls Sam Fathers "a wild man" (pp. 71, 117) and "peopleless," who, in his sombre, prideful isolation, is spiritually joined to the great bear, Old Ben, and a giant buck he calls "grandfather." In Don Segundo this extra-humanness comes most sharply to focus when he is breaking horses. Here he is his most authentic; here the vast virgin force most purely streams from his hands. Pictured so, circled by the whirling, savage dance of the untamed horses, of which he is at once the dominator and the friend, managing his own mount with a sympathetic dexterity that blends horse and man, doing all this in order to teach the young companion whom destiny has placed in his keeping—in the composite, Don Segundo calls to mind the mythical king of the centaurs, Chiron. Like Chiron he shows the abandoned hero—the Pelias, Oedipus, Jason, Aesculapius, or Achilles of our modern world—how to be the champion of men against the angry envy of the gods. Like the noble centaur poised halfway between the human and the animal, he transmits the best of both, discarding the effeminacy of the one and the lust of the other. In no other Spanish-American country, with the possible exception of Venezuela, could a modern author find a horse cult so analogous to that of ancient Greece.

Completely self-motivated, Sam Fathers and Don Segundo Sombra exercise their separate skills with the assurance and the success that guarantee the boys' allegiance. Conscious of their superiority, they refuse to take orders from anyone; like kings they come when they wish to come, and go when they wish to go. They teach the austerity by which they govern their own lives. Discipline begins with the tongue; both are ordinarily men of few words, although Don Segundo, the *tapao* respected on the pampas, can spin a long yarn when the time is right. In all, their didacticism comes out as the paradox of true profundity: freedom must be won through discipline, pride through humility.

The attraction the men hold for the boys may partly be interpreted by calling it hero worship, which appears nearly universally in the male child. In both stories the dream is pure and perfect: all the gold and none of the dross, the warm dream without the cold awakening. These are fathers as boys would most want them to be: distant yet close, available yet not ubiquitous, protective yet not smothering. It is important that these are the fathers the boys have chosen, not fathers forced upon them by the accident of their conception. And, unlike blood fathers, Don Segundo and Sam Fathers gracefully retire when they are no longer needed. Sam dies when the drama of the bear is played out, after he has passed his wisdom on to Ike. Don Segundo rides away into the sunset when he knows that his protégé has gone safely over into maturity. Thus, with the cruelty of the ego, would many a son dream of removing a natural father who is *de trop*. And thus also, in the passage rites of puberty, the substitute father's authority is broken at the end of the ceremony.

In still another respect these stories follow the formula of the initiation rite: the giving of a special name, with the awarding of a new adult name at the end of it.[22] This practice is observed in everyday life, where the diminutives and nicknames of childhood tend to be discarded when a man's estate is reached. However, Faulkner and Güiraldes have, I believe, gone beyond a mere reporting of this custom. In the beginning, Faulkner refers to his small protagonist most often as "the boy," as though he belonged only to this category, as though he were as yet only potential, and as though, true to his special view of life, Faulkner wished to reveal his character's identity little by little, like a master detective. "The boy" or "he" becomes more and more clearly defined as "Ike" and then "Isaac McCaslin" as his novitiate comes to completion. In *Don Segundo Sombra*, the first-person narrative makes it easier to avoid naming; but, nevertheless, we know that the "yo" thinks of himself

[22] See Ernest Crawley, *The Mystic Rose* (London, 1927), I, 323.

during his formation as "guacho," while the idea "gaucho" haunts the air and tantalizes the novice as a prize. At a moment of dangerous trial he wavers between childhood and manhood, between progression and regression. He first calls himself "el pobre guachito" and then, with the conviction of his manhood, he exclaims, "¿Qué puede hacer un *hombre* en tal situación, y para qué sirve un gaucho que se deja ablandar . . . ?" (p. 219, italics added). He now can distinguish between "guacho" and "gaucho," and the knowledge sets him free. Now he is ready to settle into his final category as Fabio Cáceres the landowner.

The puberty rite almost always includes some degree of seclusion,[23] and this requirement is fulfilled in *The Bear* and *Don Segundo Sombra*. It is the function of Nature to provide a refuge from the blighting routines of human society, so that the probationer, free from distractions, can match himself directly with the elemental. As the guacho broke away from school, the corrupting streets, and the hateful platitudes of his aunts, so "the boy" escapes from his books, from the poker games, the commercialisms, and the banalities of family authority. Each boy, having severed connection with the help of his substitute father, enters the sanctuary of his initiation: for the guacho, the pampas; for the boy, the Big Woods. Although different in particulars, the settings are equivalent. The pampas are extensive, and life on them is a flowing movement; the Big Woods are compressive, and motion is by bursts or, where the boy's sacraments are concerned, immobility prevails. Each locale is, however, a symbolism in appropriate regional language, and the contrasting accidents clarify the underlying resemblances. The common ground, inseparable from the total plan of the narrative, is that suspension of time which makes myth possible. When the novice enters the temple, he is beyond the reach of clocks or calendars. He lives in eternity. In both stories, normal continuous aging is avoided, and we advance by segments of time, a year or five years, with flash backs to nullify further the tyranny of chronology. As the boys are secluded in time and space, they are free to seek the heroic ecstasy.

If it is important to sequester the novice from society in general, it is even more necessary to isolate him from women in particular. Those cultures which preserve the puberty rite in simple form stress the need for removing boys from "the effeminate and weakening sphere of woman's life."[24] The mere sight of a woman can be dangerous. One is not surprised, then, to find misogyny in these stories. The fact that no woman appears in the hunting episode of *The Bear* has been aptly

[23] Arnold Van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage* (Paris, 1909), p. 107.
[24] Crawley, *op. cit.*, II, 9.

noted.[25] "Still the woods," says Faulkner, "would be his mistress and his wife." It could be added that even the main animal characters—Old Ben, the "fyce," the sacrificial deer—are males. Distrust of the female sex informs not only this first or hunting portion but also a climax of the much-discussed Part Two, a time block from Ike's twenty-first year. Here we see him in battle with spectres of the past that would drag him from his moral fortifications; and these enemies are abetted by his wife, who plays the Jezebel to make him break a promise. It is as Irving Howe says in this connection: "Women are the this-worldly sex, the child-bearers who chain men to possessions and embody the indestructible urge to racial survival."[26]

Güiraldes no less clearly feels that women are a peril for his young hero. There are, as in Faulkner, two stages of exposure to the evil, before initiation and in its last stages. In his childhood the guacho has no reason to like women. His mother's weakness has made him a bastard, and his aunts' grossness sickens his soul. His disgust for the aunts could scarcely be put in more scathing terms: "Tía Mercedes, flaca, angulosa, cuya nariz en pico de carancho asomaba brutamente entre los ojos hundidos, fue quien me privó de comida. Tía Asunción, panzuda, tetona y voraz en todo placer, fue la que me insultó con más voluntad" (p. 33). Then, as though to prove, in a culture where such proof is vital, that he is no eunuch, the boy is led to the conquest of Aurora, a rustic girl of his own age. It is a purely sensual affair, as of two healthy animals. Aurora ("Dawn") can have no other meaning than this in the story; for just as soon as the boy crosses the threshold of the temple he is, as far as any details go, unentangled with the female. "No necesito mah'embras que mis pulgas" (p. 215) is the watchword. Then, later, when the hero is twenty or twenty-one (the same age as Ike at his crisis), and has all but completed his initiation, he meets the foe once more. In Chapters XVIII and XIX there is a temptress, Paula, who bewitches the young man, a Gaucho now, and almost makes him forget his manly independence; but, armed with his moly, he resists the bane and comes away free. Paula is something like Circe, and her malevolence is suggested further by the beast-like Numa, her thrall: "un pazguato sin gracia, con una cara a lo bruto. Nunca estaba en nada y si no perdía las alpargatas en su lento andar de potrillo frisón, era porque se olvidaba de perderlas" (p. 217). It is necessary to fight this monstrosity in order to break the spell. There are no more women after Paula.

[25] Kenneth La Budde, "Cultural Primitivism in William Faulkner's 'The Bear,'" *AQ*, II (1950), 324. La Budde has cogently put the resemblance to puberty ritual in general.

[26] Irving Howe, *William Faulkner* (New York, 1951), p. 99.

As in initiation rites, the novice must undergo trials. He must prove strength and endurance: Ike to stand for hours awaiting game or to cross the Big Bottom on foot, Fabio to stick in his saddle for the interminable days and nights of the cattle drive or to leap to the back of a wild colt and break it. He must have courage, whether to face a bear or a rattlesnake or to challenge an enraged bull. Self-control is another requirement, in imitation of the mentor, a stoicism not uniquely Hispanic, not derived solely from Seneca, but shared by the young northern hero too. Though humble in reverence of forces mightier than himself, each is to know and show the pride of his office. But this can never be the false pride of possession. When Ike goes to his rendezvous with the Bear, he cannot find the altar until he has stripped himself of the contaminating watch and compass that he carries; likewise Fabio is not ready to tackle the last test in Chapter XXII, the horse breaking, until he has thrown away the money that he has won too easily and until he has heard Don Segundo tell the parable of Miseria.

The initiation—and again the mythic analogue—often includes the principle of death and resurrection, with or without an allusion to descent into the Underworld, a symbolism which both *Don Segundo Sombra* and *The Bear* contain. Ike sets out alone in search of his Holy Grail, across the Woods, purifying himself, as he goes, of all worldly taint. It is a "new and alien country" and he is "a child, alien and lost in the green and soaring gloom of the markless wilderness" (pp. 207, 208). In this eerie place he is granted his sight of the Bear; then he returns to camp and to the life of mortals. Güiraldes develops a sequence at considerable length (Chapters XV ff.) in a weird, sinister land, cursed, stricken, and lonely. Premonitions and apparitions crowd the air; the weird night with Don Sixto is surpassed by the revoltingly uncanny *cangrejal*, a salt marsh teeming with crabholes and their obscene occupants. It is, in all, an alien land, an Underworld, where the hero contends with monsters and from which he fights his way back alone, to be reborn.

Faulkner tells us clearly when the first stage of the ritual is finished, for it ends with an accolade, the smearing of the boy's face with the blood of the first deer he has killed. This is true to primitive practice, where marking or bathing with blood is not infrequent. A similar thing happens in *Don Segundo Sombra* after the build up of tension from Chapters XV through XVII. At this point there is a scene that may be considered the culmination of a ceremony. A gigantic, muddy bull detaches itself from the roundup and challenges the novice Gaucho. An unearthly shape in the dusk, the bull is like a dragon Fafnir. As he faces his antag-

onist, the boy feels a rush of healthy rage and joyously joins the combat. To aid him, Patrocinio whose name ("protection, patronage") is symbolic and who "knew what needed to be done," is at his side. Thrown from his horse, Fabio leaps upon the bull.

> Le sumí el cuchillo en la olla, hasta la mano. El chorro caliente me bañó el brazo y las verijas. El toro hizo su último esfuerzo por enderezarse. Me caí sobre él. Mi cabeza, como la de un chico, fue a recostarse en su paleta. Y antes de perder totalmente el conocimiento, sentí que los dos quedábamos inmóviles, en un gran silencio de campo y cielo [p. 202].

The baptism, the embrace, the religious calm, all are features one might expect under the ritual hypothesis. Fabio becomes a child again, to lay his head on the breast of the Great Mother. As he lies unconscious he suddenly acquires prophetic powers, and in his trance is given an accolade. A hand is laid on his shoulder and a voice tells him, "Ya has corrido mundo y te has hecho hombre, mejor que hombre, gaucho" (p. 203), and the boy thinks, "sentía casi como fuera otro."

The killing of the sacrificial animal is, of course, the climax of the big hunt, and in many ways is analogous to the *Don Segundo Sombra* scene. The death of the great bear is again a ceremonial of three: the sacrificial being, the celebrant, and the assistant—in this case the weird dog Lion who has been trained for this act. The death is an act of love: "It caught the dog in both arms, almost loverlike, and they both went down" (p. 240); and in the end all three are fused into a single entity, the bear a reservoir of power that Lion taps with his fangs, Boon with his knife. In this instance the principal initiate, the boy, is only a spectator, although through this vicarious experience he shares in the engendered magic. The one who benefits directly is Boon, a southern Caliban.[27] This is great irony—that the discharge of divine electricity failed to hit its mark. Ike should have killed the bear, but was born too late. The grace conferred on the drunkard, which stirs his lumpish mind to the useless quixotism of the final scene, would have saved Ike and made a redeeming hero of him. It was not to be, however, and he can only renounce. Fabio, who does receive supernatural grace, is made strong to face and try to overcome the problems of his destined duty.

In any case, the ritual in the wilderness is not the end; the blessing of the primitive is not enough; being a woodsman or a Gaucho is not enough. More trials lie ahead; this the initiates learn to their bewilderment.

[27] It is impossible to ignore the connotations. If the last name, Hogganbeck, brings out the coarse swinishness of the man, then also "Boon" shadows forth the sacred gift.

> Summer, and fall, and snow, and wet and saprife spring in their ordered immortal sequence, the deathless and immemorial phases of the mother who had shaped him toward the man he almost was, mother and father both to the old man born of a Negro slave and a Chickasaw chief who had been his spirit's father if any had, whom he had revered and harkened to and loved and lost and grieved [p. 326].

Here Ike recognizes that his wilderness training has left him unfinished, "the man he almost was." When Don Segundo has melted once more into the pampas and Sam Fathers has gone to rest forever on his sapling-borne sepulchre, the heroes are brought abruptly back from the timeless myth and delivered again into history. If Sam's tutelage falls short, so also Don Segundo has exhausted his ability to help Fabio, even though the latter may not realize it. Fabio may understand that his need for companionship will never be satisfied by a man of whom it can be said, "Era un espíritu anárquico y solitario, a quien la sociedad continuada de los hombres concluía por infligir un invariable cansancio" (p. 103). But Don Segundo has a more painful shortcoming, which Fabio cannot overlook in the long run. The older man accepts the barbaric custom of knife duels; his words make a murderer of a peace-loving man. Antenor tries to avoid a senseless quarrel with an older man, but Don Segundo speaks up: "Mirá muchacho que el señor ya hace un rato que te está convidando con güena manera y voh'estás desperdiciando la ocasión de divertirte un poco" (p. 278). After the inevitable death of the challenger, Fabio thinks of this as "el hecho brutal" and echoes the opinion of one of the bystanders, "Porquería . . . ; nos alabamos de ser cristianos y a lo último somos como perros . . . ; sí, como perros" (p. 281). These outbreaks of brute force cannot help but be seen as an evil by the cultured man the narrator has become.

Unlike the heroes of old, Fabio Cáceres and Isaac McCaslin are to have no apotheosis; the outcome of their second, post-primitive trials is dubious. They are offered all the woes of their contemporaries, and inherit all the iniquities of their forefathers. The most telling parallel of all is the nearly identical embodiment of the problems they are wrestling with—the land as possession. Ike's spirit revolts at having to own land, half of a farm that has come down to him from his grandfather Carothers McCaslin, because he believes that the land can never be owned by a person through an exchange of money. The land is sovereign, beyond the power of men to hold materially. If it belongs to anyone in any sense, it is through a marriage of his spirit with the land's. Therefore Isaac renounces all legal claims. This is precisely the anguish that tortures Fabio when his father dies and leaves him a ranch. Bitterly he attempts to reject the idea and, though he is at length resigned, he is not reconciled. Three years later he takes stock: "Podía mirar alrededor,

en redondo, y decirme que todo era mío. Esas palabras nada querían decir. ¿Cuándo, en mi vida de gaucho, pensé andar por campos ajenos? ¿Quién es más dueño de la pampa que un resero?" (p. 313).

Surely the vehemence of the heroes' repugnance indicates the authors' firm conviction. Why is the land so unacceptable? Why is it forced on Fabio Cáceres and Ike McCaslin? The answer must partly be, in the first case, that the land has been contaminated, in the beginning of our America, by the coming of insensitive European colonists who could not hear the magic voice of the wilderness, and would not worship it if they heard it. The land has been profaned by the ugliness of stumps, rails, fences, shacks, and saloons, and it has been defiled by social inhumanity. On this last score Faulkner leaves no doubt, as he drags out, one by one, the skeletons in the closet of the McCaslins: slavery, incest, intolerance.

In *Don Segundo Sombra*, a background of social inequity is only sketched, but each stroke of the sketch is a fresh signal. The young Gaucho's panic fear of becoming a rich man and earning the contempt of his range-riding companions is quite real. Don Leandro, the tutor of Fabio's second initiation,[28] has a laconic summation to make: "Tu padre era un hombre rico como todos los ricos y no había más mal en él" (p. 298). And this man's son comes into the world under the bar sinister. It is once again Don Leandro who, repeating verbatim the prophesy heard by Fabio in his trance, tells him, "Ya has corrido mundo y te has hecho hombre, mejor que hombre, gaucho. El que sabe de los males de esta tierra por haberlos vivido se ha templado para domarlos . . ." (p. 308). Güiraldes does not declare these evils, but he does not need to. Any Argentinean reader of his book remembers that classic of Gaucho literature, the poem *Martín Fierro*, by José Hernández, and knows that Hernández's view of the Gaucho as a victim of social injustice has colored all subsequent treatments of the literary type. The Gaucho, by this thesis, has been imprisoned, fenced in, rejected, and, because he is not allowed to take part in shaping his country's destiny, forced in upon himself. As his chains have festered, his tormented spirit has broken out in outlawry and homicide.

[28] There is a likelihood that Don Leandro, who says, "Ahora soy tu tutor y eso es casi como quien dice un padre, cuando el tutor es lo que debe ser," is taken from Güiraldes' own father. Raucho Galván, Don Leandro's son and Fabio's Horatio—equivalent to Cass McCaslin—has been identified with the author. Raucho ("Ricardito"), and his father as well, appear in the earlier novel of the same name, which was originally conceived as an autobiography, "una autobiografía de un yo disminuído" (quoted from unpublished material by Angel J. Battistessa, "Güiraldes y Laforgue," *Nosotros*, VII, segunda época [1942], 165, note). Raucho comes to grief in the fleshpots of Europe; Fabio, presumably, is to be shielded from temptation of this kind.

Ike and Fabio are asked to shoulder the burden of all this. Their problem is an American problem, that of spanning the gap between a primitive world in equilibrium, apparently perfect in the harmony of its parts, and a clearly imperfect, changing, unhappy, hybrid society. There is a schism in the continuity of their cultures, analogous to the discontinuity in the memory pattern of neurotic individuals. The formation of modern America is a rape, not a marriage; the settlers and conquistadors possessed the body of the land, not its spirit, which survived, inviolate, in the quiet places and the souls of natural men. What is now necessary is a paladin of the transition who can, with expiating hands, join the broken ends of American history. This is the price Fabio and Ike are to pay for the privilege of their training. Ike seemingly failed; Fabio, perhaps by the accident of his author's death, was left eternally preparing to work.

The problem has another American modulation. Underlying the surface movement of these two stories, stretching under even the issue of expiation, is the greater one of freedom. The word might well appear on every page. Faulkner reduces everything to this: " . . . and that was all: 1874 the boy; 1888 the man, repudiated denied and free; 1895 and husband but no father, unwidowered but without a wife, and found long since that no man is ever free and probably could not bear it if he were" (p. 281). Although Ike repeats, "I am free," and "Sam Fathers set me free," he is only making the irony sharper. For his part, Fabio, having taken freedom for granted, out on the pampas, suddenly finds he has lost it. "Así hubiese sido hijo legítimo, el hecho de poder llevar un nombre que indicara un rango y una familia me hubiera parecido siempre una reducción de libertad; algo así como cambiar el destino de una nube por el de un árbol, esclavo de la raíz prendida a unos metros de tierra" (p. 307). Now, however, he has become the tree, slave to roots, and is yet to learn that his earlier conception of liberty was wrong; for it cannot be a negation but must be a voluntary engagement.

The issue is American because it is the history of an illusion prevalent in the New World. What our authors are telling is the story of the sensitive European in the Western hemisphere. His mind buzzing with bright dreams, prejudiced in favor of Utopia, seeing El Dorados and Big Rock Candy Mountains, he imagined he was fortune's minion and, a short while afterwards, in the hushed forests or under the great sky, he thought he had found freedom. Rousseau urged him to enjoy it as *l'homme de la nature*; Emerson and Thoreau made him believe his solitude was virtuous. He imagined he had become the equal of a flower, a tree, or a mountain. But the conditions of this kind of freedom are as fragile as a frontier. The pressure of civilization crushed the dream,

killed the Bear, sent Don Segundo away into the dusk, and left the young culture heroes still seeking liberty.

Argentina and North America are the two areas of the New World where, by the 1920s and 1930s, it had become inescapably clear that the paradisiacal frontier was gone, and that Gauchos, plainsmen, hunters, and cowboys were fading memories. Güiraldes and Faulkner, with artistic sensitivity enough to understand what was happening, have mourned the lost, brave chivalry and created tributes to it in strong fiction, turning alike to the archetypal adventure that in the long run transcends history or biography. There are differences in their approach, to be sure. Güiraldes makes the narration a peregrination, an exploit of the open road, in the Hispanic tradition of the picaresque novel[29] or *Don Quijote*; Faulkner draws on the more recent American pattern of the hunt, as in *Moby Dick* or *The Old Man and the Sea*. Güiraldes' style is of the 1920s, Faulkner's of the 1940s. Fabio is in the stream of voluntaristic preoccupation, an anti-*perdido*, so to speak;[30] Ike is within the shadow of the Freudian unconscious. Such differences in no way affect the basic affinities. Güiraldes and Faulkner are linked by a common comprehension of the phenomenon America.

University of California, Berkeley

[29] See Edwin S. Morby, "¿Es 'Don Segundo Sombra' novela picaresca?," *Rev. Iberoamericana*, I (1939), 375-380.

[30] See my article, "The *Perdido* as a Type in Some Spanish-American Novels," *PMLA*, LXX (1955), 19-36. Raucho, whom Güiraldes surely has in mind while writing *Don Segundo Sombra*, is a remnant of the Argentine novel writing of the 1880s and 1890s. A victim of his aristocratic inheritance, for lack of will power, he is the perfect foil for Fabio.

BOOK REVIEWS

HANDEL, DRYDEN AND MILTON. By Robert Manson Myers. London: Bowes & Bowes, 1956. 151 p.

No single figure has ever dominated the English musical scene as George Frederic Handel dominated the first sixty years of the eighteenth century. Except for the important years 1717-19, when he was composer to the Duke of Chandos at Cannons, Handel devoted his first twenty-five years in England to the opera, and during those years composed the greater part of his thirty-eight operas, a musical-dramatic treasure store which has been unaccountably neglected. About the time of his second operatic venture (1733-38), which eventually drove him to bankruptcy and a breakdown, he turned accidentally to the oratorio and entered upon a second, more successful career, which ended in his becoming England's national composer and greatest "classic." In 1732 the success of a private revival of his masque *Haman and Mordecai* (1720) resulted in a pirated version at a rival theater; the thoroughly professional Handel immediately revised the score, renamed it *Esther*, and produced the first English oratorio.

The oratorio, like the opera, depends upon close rapport between composer and poet for its success. Handel had often been fortunate in the operatic libretti he was given, the work of such craftsmen as Paolo Rolli or Nicolino Haym, but he was much less fortunate in the quality of the English works which he set. Only when he turned from his usual hacks to the English Bible (*Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*), or to the English poets, such as Gay (*Acis and Galatea*), Congreve (*Semele*), Dryden (*Alexander's Feast* and *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*), and Milton (*L'Allegro ed Il Penseroso* and *Samson*), did Handel escape from the consistent mediocrity which mars most of his twenty-two oratorios; and even these exceptions are on occasion marred by the adapter's "art."

The most interesting of these adaptations, those from Dryden and Milton, are examined in Robert Manson Myers' book. He sketches the historical background against which we can judge these works as music and as literature, describes the revisions undertaken, and suggests the contemporary reception of the oratorios. A most instructive section of his study, from the literary viewpoint, is the first, devoted to the principal settings and revisions of *Alexander's Feast*: Jeremiah Clarke's, for the celebration of St. Cecilia's Day by the Musical Society (1697); Thomas Clayton's unsuccessful version, to a text altered by John Hughes (1711); and finally Handel's setting (1736), with negligible verbal alterations by Newburgh Hamilton. This chapter, an expansion of Myers' useful article on "Neo-Classical Criticism of the Ode for Music" (*PMLA*, LXII, 1947, 399-421), gives him an opportunity to discuss the principal critical commentaries on both the ode and its setting. He is generous with quotations from contemporary sources, such as John Brown, Charles Gilden, James Beattie, and the anonymous *An Examination of the Oratorios which have been Performed This Season at Covent-Garden Theatre* (1763). He is also able to illuminate the critical theory of the age through its treatment of this specific and familiar example. "To neo-classical

critics the combination of Handel and Dryden represented the union of poetry and music at its highest peak of attainment. Each artist was acknowledged a master in his sphere, and in Handel's *Alexander's Feast* the two arts realized together their noblest expression" (p. 34). The ode was set also by the Italian Benedetto Marcello (*Timoteo*, 1720) to an Italian translation which Myers properly assigns to Antonio Conti (it was published in Vol. I of his *Prose e Poesie*, Venice, 1739), although the latest edition of Grove's *Dictionary* continues to attribute it erroneously to Marcello himself.

The problems presented by the Miltonic settings are more complex. These poems, unlike Dryden's, were not designed for music, and it was necessary to rework them radically to fit the oratorio form. The first of these settings was *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato* (1740), the third part of which was an original "reconciliation" by the wealthy and eccentric amateur Charles Jennens, to whom fell the task of splicing Milton's twin poems, somewhat abridged, into alternating sections in a two-part structure, "Day" and "Night." Jennens' competence in assembling the first two parts from his great originals is, however, more than equalled by the incompetence of his own addition. Although Handel wrote Jennens (December 29, 1741) following the Dublin première, "I assure you that the words of the Moderato are vastly admired," *Il Moderato* was quietly dropped in all succeeding performances under the composer, and Dryden's *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1739) was generally added to fill out the program—an omission which Myers fails to note, while he alludes mistakenly to performances of the *Song* with the complete *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato* (p. 44, note 1).

Cutting *Samson Agonistes* from 1,758 lines to the 400 lines required for a libretto was a task of a different order, and it is not surprising that the finished work has little of its original's grandeur or verbal beauty. Indeed, when compared with its source, the libretto—like Milton's hero—shows a "change beyond report, thought or belief." It has, however, a certain dramatic fitness of its own, and Newburgh Hamilton, an unsuccessful dramatist about whom little is known, here provided Handel with one of the best texts the composer ever set. The cast of characters is altered somewhat, the role of the Philistine Officer being incorporated into Harapha, and "Micah, Friend to Samson" added as a soloist-spokesman for the Irsaelites, while the chorus impersonates Philistine Women and Priests of Dagon as well as Samson's countrymen. If little is left of the subtlety and scope of Milton's original, nevertheless Hamilton's libretto—which also incorporates lines from the minor poems—allows sufficient opportunities for the composer to provide the characterization and grandeur lacking in the shorn text.

The treatment of this interplay of eighteenth-century sensibility with the poetic monuments of the preceding age is the most suggestive aspect of Myers' study. His documentation of the changes made in Dryden's and Milton's verse, and of the critical reception of these altered versions, illuminates the aesthetic and, more specifically, the literary theory of the age, and provides new insights for the study of its tastes. He brings together a great many of the most important, and not always best known, critical and theoretical writers in extended quotation, and includes extracts from a number of the fulsome but highly revealing verse panegyrics in praise of Handel and his works, which often express the "typical" better than the formal criticism. A more complete collection of these poetic effusions, virtually none of which possesses the slightest literary distinction, is to

be found in the late O. E. Deutsch's monumental *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (London, 1955), which was published too late for Myers to use. A valuable feature of Myers' book is the inclusion of the texts of the oratorios treated, which fill nearly half of the volume. In addition to Newburgh Hamilton's version of *Alexander's Feast*, the texts of Clarke's original setting and of the Clayton-Hughes treatment are given for comparison, while the original version (for Draghi) of the *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* is set next to Hamilton's adaptation of it. The libretti are also included for *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato, Samson*, and the *Occasional Oratorio* (1746), the text for which was taken in part from Milton's paraphrases of the Psalms, by the Rev. Thomas Morrell.

The principal faults of Myers' study stem from some carelessness in editing, and from an occasional lack of historical perspective in dealing with the material. A quotation from the preface to Thomas Warton's edition of Milton's *Poems Upon Several Occasions* (1785) is rendered meaningless by a transposition of references: "In Handel's oratorio, wrote Thomas Warton, Milton's 'expressive harmonies... received the honour which they have so seldom found, but which they so justly deserve, of being *married to immortal verse*' " (p. 60). Warton's original lines read: "*L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were set to music by Handel; and his expressive harmonies here received the honour which they have so seldom found, but which they so justly deserve, of being *married to immortal verse*" (p. x). Further, Myers begins his first chapter: "In 1710 George Frideric Handel [*sic*] settled in London as a master of Italian opera." Although Handel produced *Rinaldo* (1711) on his first visit to London in 1710-11, he cannot be described as "settling" in London until his second visit, in 1712, ostensibly on a short leave from his court position in Hanover (Deutsch, pp. 29 ff., 49 ff.); after 1712, Handel never lived elsewhere. Later in the same paragraph, Myers says that Handel's operatic music "failed to touch the English pulse," because of his use of the Italian language and Italian singers, and that "London learned to know the true Handel only when the German composer abandoned opera" for oratorio. This, causal reasoning aside, would seem to ignore the complex social, political, and aesthetic reasons for his eventual failure as an operatic composer and impresario, and—more important—to slight his operatic work. The "true Handel" may not be found in the operas alone, but neither is he to be found in the oratorios or in the instrumental music alone; the "true Handel" is to be found in the totality of these, and the operas represent an aspect of the composer just as important, historically and musically, as the oratorios.

Moreover, Myers overstates the importance of Handel's oratorios in building and maintaining the reputation of Dryden's odes and of Milton's shorter poems. "It is undoubtedly true that Handel's setting of these two odes aided materially in perpetuating Dryden's reputation," he writes (p. 42), while of Milton he says, "it is clear that, while L'Allegro and Il Penseroso exerted relatively little influence before 1740, Handel's music stimulated a more general appreciation of Milton's poems among Englishmen of the latter half of the century" (p. 57). Although it is difficult to document such a case, Myers' own citations from Warton, Walpole, and Scott would demonstrate that Dryden's reputation needed no such assistance in the eighteenth century, however it may have suffered in the nineteenth. As for Milton, although he suggests that Joseph Warton exaggerated in attributing general acquaintance with Milton's shorter poems to the popularity of Handel's settings (in *An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, 1756), Myers appears to be in general agreement with Warton. This view, how-

ever, has been effectively discounted by the well-documented assertion in Professor Sherburn's *The Early Popularity of Milton's Minor Poems*, that "Joseph Warton was mistaken in thinking these musical settings a *cause* instead of a *result* of popularity" (p. 278, italics mine). It is also to be regretted that Myers' juxtaposition of critical comments at times obscures, rather than enhances, some interesting chronological relationships; chronological treatment often can emphasize subtle differences where another arrangement fails to do so.

Myers' book is valuable for its contribution to the history of taste, for its illumination of critical practice and theory in the first half of the eighteenth century, and for the documentation which it provides on an interesting sidelight of literary history—the interrelationship between music and literature in an age whose critical theory brought them into frequent juxtaposition—and on the results of a great musical mind working with the poetry of two great writers.

GEORGE E. DORRIS

Duke University

NOTEBOOKS OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. Edited by Kathleen Coburn. Bollingen Series L. New York: Pantheon Books, 1957. Vol. I in two parts: Text, xlii, 546 p.; Notes, xlv, 615 p.

These are beautiful books, typographically and in execution. They are the first of five volumes of Coleridge's notebooks. Each, like the first, which covers 1794-1804, is to be in two parts, text and notes. The importance of the text as mental biography is obvious, Coleridge's "Prelude" in prose. It also reads amazingly well as a consecutive prose work, for, in the latter part, details of emotional conflict and self-analysis become as evocative as a novel. The notes, too, make enjoyable reading, since Miss Coburn is the ideal editor, combining authority and critical perception with good sense and good humor. In annotating sources she is "haunted less by perfectionist standards than by the desire to make Coleridge available" (Text, p. xl). But haunted or not, she serves both ends equally well. Though formidable at first sight, with 1,842 polyglot entries in the text alone, the books are easy to read. Excellently organized and indexed, they are also easy to use.

The existence of Coleridge's notebooks has long been known. There are now fifty-six in the British Museum and ten in Victoria College Library, Toronto. Miss Coburn plans to publish them all. Their heterogeneous nature, described by Coleridge himself, is one reason for their not having been published before:

"When shall I find time & *ease* to reduce my Pocket-books and memorandums to an *Index*—or Memoriae Memorandorum? If—if I could see the last sheet of my Assertio Fidei Christianae, et Eterni temporizantis; having previously beheld my Elements of Discourse, Logic, Dialectic, & Noetic, or Canon, Criterion, & Organon, with the philosophic Glossary—in one printed volume, & the exercises in Reasoning as another—*if*—what then? Why, then, I would publish all that remained unused, Travels & all; under the Title—of Excursions abroad & at Home, what I have felt, in the words in which I told and talked them to my Pocketbooks, the Confidantes who have *not* betrayed me, the Friends whose Silence was *not* Detraction, and the Inmates before whom I was not ashamed to complain, to yearn, to weep—or even to pray!" (Text, p. xviii-xix).

Selections from various notebooks were transcribed by Derwent Coleridge, E. H. Coleridge, and J. Dykes Campbell. Alois Brandl first edited one of them—the "Gutch" notebook—in 1896, and John Livingston Lowes made extensive use of the same book in *Road to Xanadu*. Professors Raysor, Bald, House, and Whalley have transcribed from others extensively. But not until this publication has Coleridge been so generally available.

This volume presents fifteen of the notebooks in chronological order. Coleridge himself did not write them this way. One might be used for a year, then put aside in favor of another, then picked up again at a later date. The resulting confusion imposed an enormous editorial problem. Miss Coburn wanted to present them chronologically as far as possible, and still retain some idea of their consecutive physical appearance. Thus she has numbered each entry consecutively in order of time sequence and has added serial numbers showing the space relation of each to other entries. Foliation is also included. Whoever would reconstruct the notebooks in their original format can do so from tables included in an appendix.

In arranging the material chronologically, Miss Coburn accepted Coleridge's dates whenever possible. She insists that his affinity for misdating (even his own birthdate) has been overemphasized. But most of the entries are undated, and she has had to rely on the physical appearance of the entry, external facts, and marginalia. Here her impeccable scholarship has proved itself.

Miss Coburn's annotations generally cover five areas: problems of text (including dating), previous publication, possible sources, suggestions of significance, and problems needing further research. In establishing the text, she faced vexing problems of transcribing chaos and translating badly composed foreign passages. Some idea of the magnitude of this labor is obvious from two photostats of pages included in the text. In one instance, Coleridge has written an entirely new page over faded earlier entries. He has also added later marginalia and memoranda to create almost complete illegibility. All the technical inventions of modern scholarship have been used to solve problems of this kind. None seems more efficacious than the editor's own acumen.

In discussing previous publication of the entries, Miss Coburn is not concerned with all-inclusiveness. When an entry has already been published in E. H. Coleridge's *Anima Poetae*, she simply lists a reference. If the earlier editor has committed either omission or unwarranted addition materially altering the sense, she adds: "variatim." Only if the distortion is significant does she discuss it at length. An illustrative case is the note to Entry 383: "The French wholly unfit for Poetry; because is *clear* in their Language—i.e. Feelings created by obscure ideas associate themselves with the one *clear* idea. When no criticism is pretended to, & the Mind in its simplicity gives itself up to a Poem as to a work of nature, Poetry gives most pleasure when only generally & not perfectly understood." Miss Coburn's note rescues this "much-abused" passage by pointing out that everything from "French" to the second "Poetry" had been omitted in E. H. Coleridge's edition: "The argument is not for obscurity but against it, for the superior discrimination of the imagination as compared with the mere logic of the conceptual understanding or the mere instinct of youthful enthusiasm" (Notes, p. 383).

Miss Coburn is equally authoritative in discussing possible sources of the entries. Occasionally she must qualify her attributions, but again she makes no pretense to exhaustiveness. Rather she is ever conscious of her primary purpose. To have spent more time searching out all sources would have delayed publication interminably. Thus the note to Entry 1053 reads inconclusively, but suggestively:

"The quotation marks at the beginning, the previous entry, and the closeness to Hooker's sentiments, connect this entry with him, e.g. *Ecclesiastical Polity* Bk VI Sermons III and V. Possibly Coleridge was reading something on Hooker, or in which he was discussed." For the most part, however, sources are given as confidently as in this note to Entry 1063: "These four distichs by Schiller first appeared in his Musenalmanach for 1797 in the series *Tabulae votivae* von G und S. (i.e. Goethe and Schiller). Coleridge knew this Musenalmanach (as is clear from an entry in N12, and 1128n), but the wording... shows that he is not transcribing from there but from Schiller's *Gedichte* (Leipzig 1800) Pt I, where the series is entitled *Votivtafeln*."

This spirit of reliable authority is most important in suggesting the significance of various entries. Comment in the note to Entry 1070 is typical: "Coleridge was not the man to be deterred from plucking a flower of truth from a bouquet of lies... Naucritus's ineptitudes become in Coleridge's hands a commentary on Shakespeare unsurpassed for aptness." There are also many suggestions for further research in such areas as Coleridge's reading. For instance, the note to Entry 32 points out links between *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan* and the poems of Frank Sayers, M. D. The note to Entry 33 suggests relevant echoes of Edward Young's essay "On Lyric Poetry" in the *Lyrical Ballads* Preface of 1800. Similar provocative hints are imbedded throughout the notes.

The importance of Miss Coburn's work will extend, then, beyond the immediate satisfaction of a long-felt need to know Coleridge. It will be progenitive of much future study of Coleridge or Coleridgean criticism. She offers a disarming quotation from Camden in her Introduction: "It is enough for me to have begun, and I have gained as much as I looke for if I shall draw others unto this argument, whether they undertake a new worke or amend this . . ." (Text, p. xli). She promises that a fifth volume is already reserved for addenda and corrigenda. It should be a thin one.

In the entire volume, only two annotations seem below Miss Coburn's standards. The first is the note to Entry 926, which quotes Bartram's *Travels*—"The soil is a deep, rich, dark mould on a deep stratum of tenacious clay..." and adds "I applied this by a fantastic analogue & similitude to Wordsworth's Mind. March 26, 1801." She may have felt it too obvious to mention either in the note or in the index that this "fantastic analogue & similitude" appeared sixteen years later in *Biographia Literaria*, XXII. And it would have been a service if Miss Coburn had corroborated my impression that Entry 1610 is giving us Coleridge's method in composing a "conversational poem": "From this Bridge measure the Strides to the Place, build the Stone heap, & write a Poem, thus beginning—From the Bridge & repeat such a Song, of Milton, of Homer—so many Lines I must find out, may be distinctly recited during a moderate healthy man's walk from the Bridge thither... there turn in—& then describe the Scene. O surely I might make a noble Poem of all my Youth nay of *all my life*..."

One point that will no doubt be further enlarged in the final volume is the significant change in style and tone from the entries of 1794 to those of 1804. At first they are chiefly "Hints, Thoughts, Facts, Illustrations, etc etc" (Notes, p. xxxix). As time goes on they become more and more "confidantes" and "friends" and less reading notes or memoranda. Finally they also assume a therapeutic function: "*Writing a thing down rids* the mind of it" (1388). They continue the practical function of recording data which otherwise might be forgotten "in the intense *vividness of the Remembrance*" (1495), but changes in style, tone, and

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spirit of the later entries now published indicate the notebooks became eventually Coleridge's *only "Confidantes."* Emotions or ideas he would ordinarily have shared with the Wordsworths he now shares only with his notebooks and, thanks to the admirable mediation of Miss Coburn, with us.

P. M. ZALL

Los Angeles State College

THE ROMANTIC READER. Edited, and with an introduction, by Howard E. Hugo. New York: Viking Press, 1957. xv, 621 p.

The Romantic Reader is the latest in a series which includes volumes for the mediaeval period, the Renaissance, and the Age of Reason. The books contain brief selections from primary sources in each period, with introductions, simple documentary apparatus, and a chronology.

Two questions are involved in an appraisal of the recent addition to this series —the soundness of its editorial principles and its interpretation of the period which it undertakes to represent. In assigning responsibility for the editorial policy we must observe that it was not independently fashioned by the compiler of each volume. Professor Hugo quotes Crane Brinton as the model for his own practice. In *The Portable Age of Reason Reader* Brinton says that editors of this series must "keep the choice of the best subordinate to the choice of the characteristic, the representative" (p. 22), and offer a wide variety of brief selections; the same periods might have been represented by the works of fewer authors, but "how many fascinating eddies, how many fertile branches, how much in short of the age *as it really was* would thus be omitted!" (p. 23).

This plan virtually calls for the compilation of a source book in cultural anthropology for each period. Such a general selection, when illustrating the thoughts and experiences of a culture remote from our own, is always of some interest. But the appeal of collections of this sort wanes steadily as their materials are drawn from periods and cultures closer to ours, and the charm of the exotic or the simply unfamiliar is lost. As for the use of extremely brief selections from source materials throughout, this method, though possibly yielding something of value to the general historian, loses all point if we are concerned with the communication of either aesthetic experiences or philosophical conceptions.

The Romantic Reader suffers through the editorial policy of the series, because its subject matter is too recent and familiar, and its content too literary (if not too philosophical), for successful presentation in a mass of short passages. Not only is social history deliberately excluded (p. 23), but other topics which would have helped to make the selection comprehensive, such as historiography, economic theory, or psychology, are avoided. The result is a book which draws almost all of its material from literature and the arts. Even social theory (Part Five) is presented almost exclusively from the viewpoint of poets and novelists.

For a literary anthology the precept of keeping "the choice of the best subordinate to the choice of the characteristic," and thus presenting the age *"as it really was,"* is obviously dangerous. Professor Hugo has not entirely escaped this danger by choosing his excerpts from the best authors (p. 24). His categories themselves ("The Romantic in Love," "The Fatal Woman," "The Metaphysical Quester," "The Romantic Voyage," "The Haunted Castle," "The Noble Savage")

come perilously close to being clichés. One cannot help thinking that a different editorial directive might have produced a more original book. The age "*as it really was*" here comes to mean merely the age in its most popular, not to say vulgar, acceptance.

In fact, the qualities of an era are very hard to define. One of the least satisfactory ways of describing the pecularities of a period is to list the familiar preoccupations of that period. For one thing, the same ideas have a disconcerting habit of turning up in other ages. It is at least as difficult and perplexing to capture the quality of an epoch as it is to describe the style of an individual author. Perhaps the crucial difference between one period and another is only a difference of style, or even of vocabulary, not of opinions or preoccupations. "A shift in the significance of certain words" may be all that we can affirm with confidence as constituting the distinction between successive stages of history. For the early eighteenth century the key psychological problem was the continuity of the soul; for the late eighteenth century the key psychological problem was the continuity of the self. Much of intellectual history must be traced not over the highways of summary but through the bypaths of terminological change.

But the virtues of the scholar are the vices of the anthologist and no one would demand that any very subtle considerations should prevail in the compilation of a popular collection. Some plainer grounds for objecting to Professor Hugo's simplification of romanticism will have to be sought. Here we abandon our first topic, the editorial principles on which the anthology was planned, for the question of the interpretation of European romanticism which the book affords. In the first place, it excludes Russian and Italian authors, such as Lermontov and Leopardi, on principles which seem inappropriately fastidious for such an eclectic survey (p. 24). Second, it omits all aspects of European culture of the romantic period but those which convey hyperemotionalism, transcendental longings, or mystic ecstasy, and presents the period as a uniform expanse of emotional froth worked by the most superficial intellectual currents. The fact that Benthamite Utilitarianism and ideological rationalism, neurological psychology, and technological science were all products of the romantic era is ignored. Surely these are as typical of the age as are Anne Radcliffe and E. T. A. Hoffmann. Furthermore, one need not be a specialist in romanticism to know that figures popularly classed with the ultraromantics (Byron, Wordsworth, Vigny) often show strong rationalist or even neoclassical sympathies. Shelley is certainly not less the philosophical analyst of "Mont Blanc" than he is the enduring heart of an André Malraux.

Even within a single work, an emphasis on the extravagant and the melodramatic may be misleading. What makes *Melmoth the Wanderer* a great book among Gothic novels is not a chapter such as "A Dark and Doubtful Voyage" (p. 264, editor's heading), but, on the one hand, the delicate pastoral of the Immalee episodes, and, on the other, the author's bitter rationalistic awareness of the unreliability of human values. Ecstasy can be bought in the drug store (Charles Robert Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer* [London, 1892], I, 190), and the most spiritual love cannot survive the simplest physical hunger (III, 117). Perhaps this knowledge, rather than some fantastic guilt, is the intolerable secret that drives both Melmoth and many another Faustian-Gothic hero on his restless wanderings.

A consciousness of the unreliability of ecstatic emotions and of subjectivity in general is widespread in romanticism, as a chapter on romantic irony would have

made abundantly clear. Far from being unintellectual, the romantic period was constantly at pains to suppress too sharp and clear an understanding of the human condition—it suffered from a disturbing excess of rationality. It is unwarranted to say that romanticism "showed a bias against abstract thinking," and to justify by such an assumption the exclusion of all serious philosophical texts (p. 24). To judge by this anthology, Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling might never have existed.

Of course, every anthology is an invitation to complaint. It is difficult to discuss it otherwise than in terms of one's personal tastes. Every reader would undoubtedly find different occasions for objection. It is not my intent to discourage Professor Hugo from pursuing the inherently ungrateful task of the compiler, to which he has devoted much effort (*vide* his work on the Liszt correspondence and a recent anthology of world literature). The labor and the learning required for gathering and translating passages from so many different sources should not remain unappreciated. In fact, now that these objections of principle have been concluded, I should add that my own strictures will certainly not prevent me from gaining much pleasure and profit from the perusal of this book. What a number of odd and interesting selections! "The Petition of the Spithead Mutineers"; "Vegetarian Reformation" (Shelley); "Rellstab on Beethoven"; Stendhal's science of love.

Decidedly, we must find time to browse through this book again at our leisure, without demanding of it esoteric intellectual values.

IRVING MASSEY

Brandeis University

POÈMES. By Gottfried Benn. Traduits par Pierre Garnier. Paris: Librairie "Les Lettres" (Collection parallèle), 1956. 159 p.

Pierre Garnier, editor and translator of *Poèsie allemande d'aujourd'hui*, would seem well qualified to present to the French reader this selection of Gottfried Benn's poetry. The poems are arranged in chronological order; the reader will, without difficulty, perceive the development of this *enfant terrible* of the German expressionists (the poet of the morgues, putrefaction, and death) into a European representative of German poetry since World War II, and, in his last period, a celebrant of language (*Aprèslude*, 1955) rather in the manner of Stefan George. The translation of one of Benn's radio dialogues, "Können Dichter die Welt ändern?" (1925), which gives a glimpse of his aristocratic, asocial, and pessimistic insistence on the monologue character of poetry, concludes this bilingual edition.

In his introduction, Garnier proposes to sketch a precise and unbiased picture of Benn the man and the poet. The result, in fact, is a eulogy that does very little else but defend eloquently the translator's preoccupation with his subject. After delineating Benn's background (medicine, biology, nineteenth-century philosophy, expressionism), he falls into the common error of Benn interpreters, and draws the conclusion that, "c'est cette quête parfois éperdue d'un monde neuf et spiritualisé qui a conduit Benn, toujours sous l'étoile de Nietzsche à une erreur redoutable en 1933" (p. 12). It was precisely Benn's unconditional acceptance of Nietzsche (whose potent influence he never denied, not even in his sometimes embarrassing *Doppelleben*, a veritable *apologia pro vita sua*) and his conviction

that all our modern thinking is indebted to Nietzsche which prevented his alignment with the Nazi Party. Though the concepts of racial inheritance and cultivation had dazzled Benn, the lack of quality and the cultural infantilism of the Nazis awakened, if somewhat late, a hatred of their mediocrity.

Garnier calls attention to Benn's conviction that a poem can never be international and that in an important sense a poem is therefore untranslatable. But he restricts this "untranslatable part of the poem" to "le jeu des mots, le miroitement gratuit, un certain brillant, un certain parfum [!]," an area quite extensive if it should remain "untranslated." If, beyond this untranslatability, Garnier is convinced that "l'expression profonde du monde et la pensée sont le trésor commun de l'humanité" (p. 12), we must pose a further question. Why did he choose among Benn's poems a large number whose contribution to this "trésor commun" is quite negligible and whose "part intraduisible" is especially extensive—or at least refuses to yield to the somewhat modest poetic and linguistic abilities of this translator?

It is precisely the area where the translator's competence and the untranslatable part of the poem meet which is interesting. The difficulties which Garnier encountered result from the variety and intensity of Benn's poetic forms and constructs. Very often a careful reading of the entire poem or of several poems of the same type could have prevented Garnier's frequent mishaps, which unfortunately resemble incompetence.

There are, basically, four types of poetry which Benn wrote and which, to make matters worse for the translator, are not always easily distinguishable and, on occasion, are so interlocked that they appear in one and the same stanza. There are, first of all (the order is not strictly chronological), the early expressionist poems of the notorious volumes *Morgue*, *Fleisch*, and *Schutt*. Passages in these poems point to a later stage, the most difficult and hazardous for the translator—the rhymed and unrhymed poems of the *Trunkene Flut* period (which includes also some of the *Statische Gedichte*). Third, there are the poems dominated by Berlin slang, lyrical *parlando*, scientific facts, quotations of and allusions to advertising slogans, and a good measure of Benn's very own *Schnoddrigkeit*. These, in their most characteristic form, are found mainly in *Destillationen* and *Fragmente*. A last type, foreshadowed in the final rhymed stanzas of some of the long poems (e.g., "Verzweiflung," "Spät," both from *Destillationen*, 1953), is the rather Georgean, almost precious stanza of *Aprèslude*, Benn's last volume.

In the handling of the first type, Garnier's shortcomings become clear without yet ruining the poem for the reader. It is interesting to compare one famous short poem from *Morgue*, "Kleine Aster," with two French and one English translation.

> "Ein ersoffener Bierfahrer wurde auf den Tisch gestemmt.
> Irgendeiner hatte ihm eine dunkelhellila Aster
> zwischen die Zähne geklemmt.
> Als ich von der Brust aus
> unter der Haut
> mit einem langen Messer
> Zunge und Gaumen herausschnitt,
> muß ich sie angestoßen haben, denn sie glitt
> in das nebenliegende Gehirn.
> Ich packte sie ihm in die Brusthöhle
> zwischen die Holzwolle,
> als man zunähte.

Trinke dich satt in deiner Vase!
Ruhe sanft,
kleine Aster!"

The tone of the poem is simple narrative, except for the statement of the theme and title in the second and third lines (p. 17).[1] The English translation by Edgar Lohner and Cid Corman (*New Mexico Quarterly*, Summer 1952) has: "Somehow someone left him a dark lilac-brightened aster / caught between his teeth." Garnier translates: "Un inconnu lui avait pressé entre les dents / Une aster [one wonders why Garnier changed the gender!] couleur de lilas clair et d'ombre" (p. 21).

The two problems are the color of the flower and the shocking action of someone jamming it between the corpse's tightly locked jaws. While the English translation solves the color problem well, it totally misses the second point. To remark on this is by no means pedantry. Benn is shortchanged, especially in the early poems, if one does not show the contrast and the eventual reconciliation between elements of stark, cynical force and almost involuntary flashes of intense lyricism. In "Mann und Frau gehn durch die Krebsbaracke" this reconciliation, which takes place at the end of a poem that apparently speaks of nothing but putrefaction, is foreshadowed in the remarkable lines: "Sieh, dieser Klumpen Fett und faule Säfte, / das war einst irgendeinem Mann groß [Garnier manages: "Cela signifia jadis quelque chose pour un homme"] / und hieß auch Rausch und Heimat" (p. 24).

A felicitous solution of the problems in "Kleine Aster" can be found in the translation by the Alsatian poet, Ivan Goll (*Les Cahiers de la Pléiade*, Winter 1950-51): "Quelqu'un lui avait fiché entre les dents / Un aster mauve clair-foncé." Goll avoids the excessive use of the genitive by translating "Bierfahrer" as "camionneur," thus bypassing Garnier's awkward "livreur de bière." Where Benn has "Trinke dich satt in deiner Vase!," Goll translates "Bois tout ton saoul dans ce vase!" (capturing the slight vulgarity with the word "saoul")—Garnier, again much too clumsily, "Bois dans ton vase jusqu'à plus-soif!" Brevity is of the utmost importance in these early poems. One wishes that Garnier had chosen "croque-mort" instead of "gardien des morts" for "Leichendiener" in the poem "Kreislauf," and had paid closer attention to the verbs and to the meaning of words within the context of the poem. In "Negerbraut," "wüten" is certainly not "irriter" but rather "fouiller," and "gebettet" is only partially translated by "alitée" (Goll has a very fine first line: "Puis on coucha sur des coussins de sang noir / La nuque blonde..." for Benn's "dann lag auf Kissen dunklen Bluts gebettet / der blonde Nacken..."). By choosing the "poetic" word "épanouissement" instead of "départ" to translate "Aufbruch," Garnier not only does not enhance the poem but confounds the context. Lohner and Corman always give the meaning quite correctly; they fail only in the poems of the period of the *Trunkene Flut* or later, where meaning is partially expressed by rhythm and rhyme.

A poem intermediate between the first and second types, "Englisches Café," can be translated by Garnier in a fashion, however inadequately; so can "Curettage," whose second stanza runs: "Der Kopf verströmt und ohne Dauer, / als ob sie rief: / Gib, gib, ich gurgle deine Schauer / bis in mein Tief" (p. 27). This

[1] The German quotations are from Gottfried Benn, *Gesammelte Gedichte* (Wiesbaden, 1956). This edition was also used by Garnier in the preparation of his volume of translation.

becomes: "La tête à la dérive et sans durée, / Comme si elle criait: / Donne, donne, j'avale ton frisson / Jusqu'au plus profond de mon être." The typical poem of the second type, however, such as "Dir auch—:," is not rendered at all. Here, mere content is not of primary importance. The poem is misunderstood in translation (p. 66) if its form is not perceived. It may well be that the form is "intraduisible." At any rate, there remain two choices for the translator of limited gifts—to omit the poem or to be content with a fairly accurate but lyrically unambitious prose rendering. An unrhymed, partially successful translation of "Dir auch—:" was published by Francis Golffing (*Poetry*, August 1952), but Golffing, Lohner and Corman (cf. their translation of "Kretische Vase" in *Western Review*, Winter 1953), and Garnier do not capture this type of poem as a whole because they do not capture the intoxicating monotony and the incantatory rhythm. Here, the music of a verse translation would, I think, richly compensate for some loss of literal detail.

This is true also for those poems in which the last stanza or section is rhymed, e.g., the poem "Spät." The rhyme begins as if quite unconsciously in Part IV, and Part V consists of two strictly rhymed (abab cdcd) quatrains. Lohner and Corman disregard the rhyme entirely. Benn's

> "siehst du es nicht, wie einige halten,
> viele wenden den Rücken zu,
> seltsame hohe schmale Gestalten,
> alle wandern den Brücken zu."
> (Page 350)

becomes in English,

> "Don't you see how some of them stop,
> many turn their backs to it,
> curious tall slender shapes,
> all are wandering toward the bridges."

Quite correctly translated, but it could hardly have been done any plainer! The mood of doom and of a grand farewell is not conveyed. Had Benn wished to forego rhythm and rhyme, he would have done so by writing Part V in the same manner as Parts III and IV. Garnier finds a practical solution by rhyming lines one and three of each quatrain and thereby preserving some of the poetic intensity—despite the awkwardness of the second line:

> "Ne vois-tu pas: quelques-unes s'arrêtent,
> Nombreux sont ceux qui tournent le dos,
> Bizarres, hautes, étroites silhouettes,
> Tous se dirigent vers les ponts."
> (Page 127)

Benn's prose poems of the third type present problems of their own. Some seemingly serious phrases are ironical, and the translator must distinguish between slang and literary language—which Garnier does too severely. These poems must be kept in colloquial language which will allow the sudden lyrical outbursts frequent in Benn's early prose, in the Rönne pieces, for example. Even gifted translators like Eugene Jolas have rendered these sudden lyrical interruptions very poorly. To cite but one example: "Da aus Gärten warf sich ihm der Krokus

entgegen" ("Der Geburtstag"), Jolas translates, "From the gardens, the crocus glared at him" (*Transition*, August 1927). Malcolm Campbell has no more success with Benn's "Urgesicht," published in the same journal (June 1929). Alain Bosquet avoids some of these errors by employing, in his translation of "Gehirne" (*Les Cahiers de la Pléiade*, Winter 1950-51), an unchanging tone that neglects stylistic nuances but yields a serviceable translation.

Basically, the poems of the third type are essayistic in nature and are in some cases (as are most of Benn's essays) merely *Vorstadien* of poems in which material is listed but not yet put into poetic order: e.g., "Restaurant," "Außenminister," "Fragmente," and "Satzbau." Garnier is perhaps most successful in his translations of this type of poetry, some of which is highly complex—a success due in part to his occasional imitation of the German rhyme scheme. If "Le Moi tardif" is not in all respects pure Benn, it is at least a very fine reading of Benn in French —and some of the earlier translations were not Benn at all.

Garnier has translated none of the very late group of poems, collected in *Aprèslude*. This is surprising, since he translated Benn's last poem, "Kann keine Trauer sein" and based his selection on the *Gesammelte Gedichte*, which includes *Aprèslude*. The Georgean stanza, rich in splendor and monotonous in a melancholy that comes with perfection, the stanza which Benn celebrates in a truly priestly manner in "Ebereschen," "Tristesse," "Letzter Frühling" (which recalls George's "Komm in den totgesagten park und schau..."), and "Aprèslude," should by all means be presented in a selection which claims authenticity. Garnier translates a comparable stanza from "Epilog" (quatrain two of Part IV):

> "Es ist ein Knabe, dem ich manchmal trauere,
> der sich am See in Schilf und Wolken ließ,
> noch strömte nicht der Fluß, vor dem ich schauere,
> der erst wie Glück und dann Vergessen hieß."
>
> (Page 361)

> "Il est un enfant dont parfois j'ai peine
> Qui se confiait aux vagues, aux joncs
> Le fleuve n'était pas devant qui j'ai fièvre,
> Qui s'appela joie et puis abandon."
>
> (Page 141)

But, with its vagueness ("confiait," "abandon") and lack of pomp, this hardly does justice to the late poems.

In my opinion Garnier has not done his best—a view borne out by his occasional successes. The mishaps in his translations are partly due to difficulties inherent in the translation of Benn's verse. These difficulties are, I believe, to a large degree surmountable, but they require a poetic gift in the handling of the language of the translator, a profound knowledge of German (which Garnier may lack), and a critical perspective which must precede the act of translation itself. In the last analysis, the poet is too often missing in the translator. If Garnier's work falls short of the best among good translations of modern poetry, the original texts are certainly not at fault.

RICHARD EXNER

Princeton University

WILLIAM HAMILTON OF BANGOUR. By Nelson S. Bushnell. Aberdeen: University Press, 1957. viii, 164 p.

The subtitle of this biography indicates the twofold, though slight, claim to remembrance of William Hamilton of Bangour (1704-54)—"Poet and Jacobite." As a poet, he was a precursor of later and better Scots poets who, yielding to the same pressures, followed him in choosing English as the language for their poetry. His reputation depends mainly, however, upon a single uncharacteristic poem of his twenties, beginning "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride," suggested by the Scottish ballad, "The Braes of Yarrow." His biographer considers this one poem to be also Hamilton's chief contribution to the development of English poetry—a modern ballad that was by nearly three quarters of a century a predecessor of *Lyrical Ballads* and Scott's "Glenfinlas." Wordsworth called it exquisite and borrowed from it a line for "Yarrow Unvisited." Thus Hamilton has a place in English literature as a man who made—to use the concluding words of the text of this book—a "tiny contribution to the literature of the English tongue." He has also a small place in the history of comparative literature, by reason of his translations, adaptations, and imitations of the classics, which constitute about a third of his verse.

As a Jacobite, his career might be said to have begun in his thirties, at Rome. An earlier writer quoted by Bushnell (p. 61) tells what happened to him there: "When sauntering one day about the Capitol, a young man laid his hand on his shoulder, saying, with a smile, 'Mr. Hamilton, whether do you like this prospect or the one from North Berwick Law best?' He immediately recognized it to be Prince Charles. They entered into conversation. An intimacy took place which was dignified with the name of friendship." Hamilton's support of the prince in the rising of 1745-46, as poet, propagandist, would-be historian, and probably also as actual combatant, was enough to send him into exile from Scotland for three years but not enough to make him more than a very minor historical figure. His participation in events which Scott and others have since made seem romantic contributes, however, to his interest as a subject for biography.

His membership by birth in the highest society of Edinburgh meant that he knew many prominent Scotsmen of his day, and thus contributes to the interest of his life. After the death of his older brother in 1750, he succeeded to Bangour, along with other estates, and to considerable wealth. He was a well-educated man and personally amiable; he was absent-minded to the point of eccentricity and is said to have forgotten his errand when sent for the midwife at the time of the birth of his first child. He might have been worth a fuller biography, if materials were available; but unfortunately they are not, and references to him are hard to disentangle from references to other William Hamiltons.

A great deal of painstaking, though not very productive, searching for facts has gone into this book, including the consultation of manuscript sources; and the facts that were found were used to produce a work of scholarship, not a fictionalized biography, though the writing is free from academic pretentiousness. The text is preceded by a chronological list of the most important events of Hamilton's life and is followed by footnotes, four appendices, and an index. The footnotes are hard to ignore, because they are not exclusively bibliographical, and hard to consult, because they are not placed at the bottom of the page. They are numerous and yet not as informative as they could be. The footnote to the vignette of Hamilton's meeting with the prince, for example, does not give the source of

the quotation; and it is odd that Note 20 of Chapter V, to the statement in the text that the authorship of "The Faithful Few" is ascribed to Hamilton in two reference works, does not mention the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*. The index is not full enough to be very useful, and the defect is not wholly made up for by the appendices, good though they are. There are five illustrations, two of them pictures of Hamilton.

That "it seems a worthy though modest enterprise to assemble whatever information has come to light about him and his work, and to attempt an occasional evaluation" (p. 2), is a statement justified by this worthy though modest biography of William Hamilton of Bangour.

C. R. B. COMBELLACK

Eugene, Oregon

DE MUZE IN HET MORGENLICHT. INLEIDING TOT DE GESCHIEDENIS VAN DE EENHEID DER WESTERSE LITERATUUR. By J. C. Brandt Corstius. Zeist: W. de Haan, 1957. vii, 176 p.

Without claiming to do more than present an introduction to the unity of Western literature, Dr. J. C. Brandt Corstius has produced an interesting and stimulating book on the comparative approach to literature. It is intended for those who are not literary specialists, but who have a love for literature; in this sense it is a "popular" book. Yet it is a book written by a scholar, complete with footnotes, index, and bibliography. Dr. Brandt Corstius has accomplished a double and difficult task with admirable skill, combining scholarship and a popular tone.

Dr. Brandt Corstius has read widely, and quotes the verses of the Chinese poet Li-Tai-Po as well as the poetry of the Basothos in South Africa. Naturally, he also uses quotations from a number of Dutch and Flemish writers. All this material, which is probably unfamiliar to most Americans, is provocative and interesting. He is obviously thoroughly conversant with the work of the leading European and American comparatists, as well as with the techniques of the new critics. He carries Curtius' idea of *topoi* into modern literature, and surveys the traditional treatment of nature and landscape. There is also a review of the traditional concepts of paradise, death, and divine intoxication.

Before summing up the various approaches to literary history, Dr. Brandt Corstius challenges a number of generally accepted views, and has some valuable new ideas to offer. He questions, for example, the validity today of the old idea of influence in literature (p. 27), and illustrates the modern use of traditional material by several striking examples. He illuminates the critical importance of historical change in any understanding of comparative literature, underlining the changing attitude toward mythology in several literary generations. Whether he is commenting on such broad theoretical problems as literary schools in general, or on such details as the fact that it was huge printing plants and not the mediaeval printing press that increased the size of the reading public, Dr. Brandt Corstius' ideas are generally valuable.

At the very beginning of his book he makes the point that only in the ancient and mediaeval periods is it possible to speak of general literature and include the Oriental countries, although he later refers to the international character of modern prose and poetry. His main thesis is that there is a unity to Western literature, not only in the great movements or styles but also in the genres. But he

does not fall into the Hegelian trap of presenting literary history as a series of clearly defined movements, always in sharp contrast and antagonism to each other. It is refreshing to find the author aware of the distorted nature of such a pattern, which can only be forced to appear through oversimplification and the neglect of significant details. Instead he demonstrates how the naturalists paved the way for Kafka, for example, and how symbolism prepared the victory of abstract poetry.

This book is an outgrowth of a series of lectures given at the University of Utrecht, and to some extent its organization suffers from certain structural defects that are the result of its original form. Thus the sequence and development of ideas is often what would be expected in a group of lectures rather than in a book. A less serious defect, but one that is always unfortunate in a scholarly work, is the rather large number of typographical errors. Yet the book has much to offer, not only as a general introduction to the comparative method, but also in its perceptive and original comments on several aspects of the comparative approach to literature.

SEYMOUR L. FLAXMAN

New York University

VARIA

Announcements

With this issue *Comparative Literature* begins its eleventh volume. At this milestone in its career *CL* has published a comprehensive cumulative index to its first ten volumes and redesigned its cover and typographical dress. The new format made its first appearance with the index, which has been mailed to the journal's subscribers, to libraries throughout the world, and to all members of the Modern Language Association of America. Copies of the index are still available, and will be sent free of charge to scholars and libraries not included on our mailing lists. Address requests to: University of Oregon Publications, Eugene, Oregon.

René Wellek, Sterling professor of comparative literature at Yale University and a member of the Editorial Board of *Comparative Literature*, was awarded a $10,000 prize by the American Council of Learned Societies in January 1959. The prize is one of ten awarded annually by the Council to outstanding scholars in the humanities.

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